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NEW YORK 16, N. Y.

ACCENT

A QUARTERLY OF NEW LITERATURE

Volume 7, Number 3

Spring, 1947

STANLEY EDGAR HYMAN:

Van Wyck Brooks and Biographical Criticism

In the case of Van Wyck Brooks, it is particularly difficult to abstract a usable critical method from the rest of the man and his work. It has been at least a decade since anyone concerned with literature took him very seriously, and in that decade he has at once achieved an enormous popular success (*The Flowering of New England* "headed best-seller lists for fifty-nine consecutive weeks") and become a narrow and embittered old gentleman with a white mustache. He has entered the lists against "coterie literature," that is, James, Joyce, Eliot, and the rest of the serious moderns, who represent the "death-drive"; opposing to them "primary literature," that is, Sandburg, Frost, and Lewis Mumford, who represent life and health. "Literature has been out on a branch. We must return to the trunk," he remarked pontifically, and spurred on by Archibald MacLeish's wartime *kulturkampf*, suggested burning German books and announced that writers in the democratic countries had poisoned the minds of their readers and sapped France's will to resist Hitler. He has emerged as increasingly xenophobic, his early resentment of immigrants, particularly "young East Siders," with their "alien wants" bewildering "hereditary Americans," hardening in the last books to a kind of Yankee racism, so that New England declined when "alien races pressed on the native race," and in the last books "race" and "racial" are scattered thick as nuts in fudge. At the same time he has become increasingly preoccupied with genealogy, with the pursuit of "one's forbears," with "the burgher-aristocracy, the Van Wycks" (Brooks wrote of Alcott "He was much concerned with his genealogy. At fifty-four, why not?"), and the footnotes of *New England: Indian Summer* are chiefly long lists of the family lines of writers, or which writers went to Harvard and which to Yale. He was now "convinced" by Spengler, devoted to "the great Hans Zinsser" and Dr. Alexis Carrell.

Brooks has made so many switches in his forty years of writing and his eighteen books that it is difficult to perceive any consistent pattern. He has been an aesthete, a socialist, a Freudian, a manifesto-writer, a Jungian, a Tolstoyan book-burner, and finally a compiler of literary pastiche and travelogue for The-Book-of-the-Month Club. He has moved from total arty rejection of America and its culture to total uncritical acceptance. He has occupied almost every political and philosophic position of our time, and called them all "socialism." Nevertheless, there is a consistent pattern in his work, from his first book to his last, but it is a method rather than a viewpoint, the method of biographical criticism.

The basic assumption of biographical criticism is that the chief clues to a man's work can be found in the study of his life. "The only fruitful approach is the personal approach," Brooks wrote in *America's Coming-of-Age*, and a quarter of a century later, in *The Opinions of Oliver Allston*, he defined what he meant by the personal approach in biography, and distinguished it from the scientific approach:

But these facts [of psychoanalysis] are no more useful than other facts, and all his facts are useless until the biographer has reconceived them in the light of his intuitive faculty, with its feeling for reality and proportion. This is a different mental organ from the intelligence, which actually paralyzes its operation. It is not the causes that matter in biography, it is the character itself, which belongs to the moral and aesthetic sphere, a sphere that is quite apart from the sphere of causation. The attempt to turn biography into a science is as futile as it is with history.

This intuition of character or personality, with brief forays into using the intelligence, that paralyzing organ, has been the central feature of all Brooks' work. It is a thread of consistency running through bewildering heterogeneity, and to follow its permutations the order and dates of his books are important.

His first critical book was *Wine of the Puritans*, published in London in 1908, while Brooks was living in England. (Before that, as Harvard undergraduates in 1905, he and John Hall Wheelock had published a pamphlet of their verse anonymously.) Subtitled "A Study of Present-Day America," *Wine of the Puritans* is in the form of a dialogue between Brooks and a young man called "Graeling" at Baja in Italy, and it is one of the most purely precious, artiness for artiness' sake, documents of the twentieth century, lacking only the Beardsley illustrations. "Another shipload of Italians going to take our places at home," one of the young men murmurs, pointing a languid ivory finger. "American history is so unlovable," Brooks assures us, writing a little manifesto for expatriation; Barnum is the typical American; socialism is "a dazzling dream of impossible Utopias." Nevertheless, amid all the absurdity, the book contains two serious points. One is a distinction between the wine of the Puritans, the emphasis on the real in America, which became commercialism, and the aroma of the wine, the emphasis on the ideal, which became transcendentalism. Here, in embryo, is the distinction between "highbrow" and

"lowbrow" of which Brooks was later to make so much. The other significant thing in the booklet is the germ of the later biographical method. Brooks is able to place American culture only by seeing it in terms of personalities ("personality was always to be his key word") — Barnum, Brigham Young, Rockefeller — and he confesses that he had tried to write a book called *The American Humorist*, but was forced to give it up when he couldn't "recreate the personalities" behind their pseudonyms.

Brooks' next little book, published in London in 1913, was *The Malady of the Ideal*, a melancholy discussion of Maurice De Guérin, Amiel, and Senancour's Obermann. Along with some extravagant pastoral lyricism about "deep-bosomed milkmaids" a paean to Catholic pantheism, and some highflown racial nonsense about the French soul and the Teutonic soul, Brooks furnishes three intelligent biographical studies of souls sick with longing for the Absolute, the de Guérin piece almost straight biography, the other two tinged with critical analysis, particularly the shrewd comparisons of Senancour with Arnold and Gissing.

The next two works were short critical biographies, *John Addington Symonds* in 1914 and *The World of H. G. Wells* in 1915. The Symonds is a rather evasive study, ignoring Symonds' dreadful nervous disease and alternately hinting at and denying his homosexuality. It opposes "social order" and "muses" as the two conflicting poles, and sees Symonds as torn between the respective claims of "man" and "artist." The book also announces one of Brooks' most interesting and valuable theories: that a writer's "choice of themes is never accidental," that a critic deals with writers with whom he has "special affinities," and that critical works are thus "slips," "half-confessions." The study of Wells goes through five chapters of critical analysis before Brooks gets down to biography, but the one biographical chapter is the core of the book. Wells was the child of a shopkeeper and a lady's maid; like Dickens and Defoe he rose out of this class by his own intellectual efforts, and all his views and all his books are thus projections of the opportunism of his own life. Points of view, Brooks writes, "are determined very largely by the characters and modes of living of the men who hold them." The book is one of Brooks' best, and the view of Wells as characteristic shopkeeper furnishes an amazing insight into the fluid and changeable world of his philosophy.

The next works were *America's Coming-of-Age*, published in 1915, and *Letters and Leadership*, published in 1918, both of them collected in one volume, along with an essay on *The Literary Life in America*, as *Three Essays on America* in 1934, with a preface apologizing for their "impudence" and "levity." All three are manifestoes and calls for action, and all three were tremendously influential on a literary generation, although precisely what action they called for never quite became clear. *America's Coming-of-Age* announced that "One cannot have personality . . . so long as the end of society is an impersonal end like the accumulation of money"; castigated the warped division of our thinkers, beginning with Edwards and Franklin, into "Highbrow" and "Lowbrow"; and proposed as the hope "personality on a middle

plane," self-fulfillment, and socialism. Exalting Whitman, it got in some good cracks at Emerson's "imperfect interest in human life," "the grotesque, pathetic and charming futility of men like Bronson Alcott," and the deficiencies of the rest of "Our Poets." *Letters and Leadership* attacked the blighting effects of pioneering utilitarianism, or Puritanism, on American culture, announced that poetry, art, and Wells' "science" would finally save society from its own spiritual corruption, and discussed in rather sharp terms some of the critical and artistic personalities the times had produced. *The Literary Life in America* announced that the American artist is an exile and a criminal, and called for a "school" of writers with a sense of "free will" and "genuine, full-blooded egoism" to "reforestate our spiritual territory."

The Ordeal of Mark Twain, published in 1920, was Brooks' first major book. It is discussed in some detail below, but it is worth noting here that it represented the best balance of the biographical method he ever achieved, the use of social and psychological insights to deepen the "intuitions of personality" without ever pushing any of them far enough to take him out of the frame of biography into science or pseudo-science. The work is partially straight biographical criticism; partially a social study, Twain seen against an oppressive social background; and partially amateur psychiatry, with Brooks drawing on Freud for concepts like repression, sublimation, projection, etc., techniques of dream analysis, and a theory of the function of humor, drawing on Adler for terms like "masculine protest," and drawing on any other psychoanalysis for anything he can pick up.

Sometime between 1914, when it appeared in French, and 1924, when he translated it for an American edition, Brooks read Leon Bazalgette's *Henry Thoreau, Sauvage*, and was apparently fascinated by the method, which consisted of using the writer's words, without quotation marks or any indication of their source, to give his thoughts. Even used on a writer like Thoreau, who wrote little not directly autobiographical, the method was a wrench, but when Brooks used it in his book on James, *The Pilgrimage of Henry James*, which appeared in 1925, it produced an utter botch. The method resulted in a series of increasingly offensive interior monologues, reducing James' first-rate mind to the stature of his simplest characters, culminating, in the chapter called "The Altar of the Dead," in an almost incredible vulgarization: James as a sniveling old woman complaining of how lonely he is in an England of bad manners, usurpers, nest-foulers, monsters, upstarts, vulgarians, gamins, and cads.

Apart from the absurdity of the method, *The Pilgrimage of Henry James* is a poor book because Brooks, a critic of extremely limited imagination and aesthetic sensibility, had chosen to write about a writer he neither liked nor understood. He particularly disliked James' later works, what F. O. Matthiessen has aptly called "the major phase," and revealed very little idea of what any of them are getting at. Even if this had not been an inevitable result of an aesthetic deficiency, it would have been an inevitable result of the assumption underlying the book, that James killed his talent by cutting his native roots, which required Brooks to find James' work progressively deteriorating, just

as a comparable assumption about the social destruction of Twain required him to overestimate Twain's potential enormously. The method is still biographical, but it is less social, less psychoanalytic, less productive of insights into the work, and in the last analysis, relatively pointless.

Brooks' next book was *The Life of Emerson*, published in 1932. It was his first work which made no pretense of being a critical study, was admittedly a biography, and, unlike the *Symonds*, the *Wells*, the *Twain* and the *James*, had no point of view. (The title is an interesting confirmation of this: instead of being an "Ordeal of," a "Pilgrimage of," or some similar slanting, it is simply "The Life of.") Not by coincidence, it became a Literary Guild selection, was Brooks' first book to have a wide popular sale, and marked the end of his serious work and the beginning of his total uncritical acceptance. Studies of Whitman and Melville he had projected after the *James* had been postponed or given up (Brooks' announcement of failure on Melville was the remark in "Notes on Herman Melville," never since reprinted, "We cannot penetrate the mystery of a personality.") and Emerson was now, as Whitman had once been, his "personality on a middle plane," Franklin *plus* Edwards, Twain *plus* James.

Meanwhile, in 1927 Brooks had published a collection of short pieces, *Emerson and Others*, including "Emerson: Six Episodes," chiefly notes for the 1932 life, the "Notes on Melville," and a half dozen other essays. In 1932 he published *Sketches in Criticism*, an extensive collection of his critical essays, some of them going back before 1920, from *The Seven Arts*, *The Freeman*, etc. In these the biographical method is frequently a simple, pat formula almost parodying itself: Barnum was fooled by his family as a child, therefore he grew up to fool others, etc. The new developments were: a shift from Freud and Adler to Jung's glossier terminology, particularly those tempting oversimplifications, the latest pairing for his highbrow-lowbrow dichotomy, "introvert" and "extrovert" which he was to continue through the following books; and a new tone of pettishness, in pieces like "The Parvenu Intellectuals" and "The Doctrine of Self-Expression," toward modern literature (Henry James, Eliot, etc.) never named but always attacked as "expressionism," or literature of "psychology" and "experiment." Many of the pieces are frankly biographical, like a short one simply called "From the Life of Stephen Crane" and a memoir of John Butler Yeats, and very few of them deal with the living, since, like Sainte-Beuve, Brooks found himself confronted with the problem that a biographical method cannot really begin to function until all the facts are in. What little criticism is essayed is generally the marshalling of giant cannon to blast such gnats as Hamilton Wright Mabie and Joaquin Miller.

In 1936, Brooks published the first volume in his magnum opus, a literary history of the United States, calling it *The Flowering of New England*. Poor as it is in comparison with the work of such serious literary historians as Taine, Brandes, De Sanctis, and Parrington, the two volumes that have so far followed it are a good deal worse. *The Flowering* at least has a subject, the cultural climate of New England before the Civil War, the interstices *between* the writers; whereas *New England: Indian Summer* tried to create a comparable

cultural climate by fiat for New England writers after the Civil War, even if it meant kidnapping Henry Adams from Washington and Cummings from Greenwich Village; and *The World of Washington Irving* abandoned even this fiat unity, and has no organizing principle other than two dates and the idea that any pre-Civil War writer not treated in *The Flowering* ought to be included somewhere. All three books are mosaics of quotes, scraps from old letters and documents, records of remarks made, lists of works written. They have no point of view, no standards, no depth, no ideas, and boundless love for everyone without distinction: in the first, Bancroft, Prescott, Motley and Parkman are four comparable historians; in the second, Howells and James are two equally important writers; in the third, Jefferson, Hamilton and Aaron Burr are three equally valuable statesmen.

The method is still pastiche: quote and paraphrase, quote and paraphrase. Brooks is aware of Brandes and Taine, quotes them approvingly, and regards his book as in their tradition, but the actual literary world he sees is an undetermined anarchy where accident and coincidence rule: Lowell had a period of radicalism because his wife was fervent and he was suggestible; it ended because she died and he stopped being suggestible; Melville "acquired in the forecandle the tragic sense of life" (why didn't Dana?). Most annoying, since the Brooks of the *Wells* and *Twain* volumes had been at least a writer of real clarity, is a new mistiness and obscurity of style, a failure to come out of the fog and say anything definite, a doubt as to whether any given phrase is quoted, paraphrased, or Brooks' own, an infuriating inability to find out *which* Boston abolitionist received a slave's ear in the mail ("One might receive . . ."). The primary interest is still biographical, but increasingly biography that fails to lead to any conclusions, or brings forth a stillborn mouse: that Adams was inevitably a dilettante, that Poe's work must have had its source in the insecurity of his life, that Motley's politics determined his histories.

Meanwhile, before the appearance of *The World of Washington Irving*, a slim volume called *On Literature Today* and *The Opinions of Oliver Allston* had appeared in 1941. *On Literature Today*, a brief address delivered at Hunter College, is an affirmation that the mood of "health, will, courage, faith in human nature" found in Robert Frost and Lewis Mumford is "the dominant mood in the history of literature," and can most charitably be dismissed as an honest hysterical reaction to what looked like defeat for the democratic nations in the early years of the war. *The Opinions of Oliver Allston* is a much deeper and more pernicious book. An autobiography thinly disguised as a memoir to "my friend Oliver Allston, who died last year in his early fifties," the book offers a channel for filtering off all the venom accumulated in Brooks by the sugary literary history volumes. The device itself was undoubtedly borrowed from Randolph Bourne's *History of a Literary Radical*, an autobiography which purported to be about "my friend Miro." It serves a number of excellent purposes: allowing him to be as frank as he wants and use his journals directly without violating his formidable reserve; allowing him to change the record where he wants, since this is not his life, but Allston's; allowing him to be

as effusive about himself and his value as he wants, "objectively"; and finally, allowing him to kill Allston off, and with him the last vestiges of his literary conscience, in a complicated rebirth ritual. Brooks plays all sorts of ironic tricks with the personality of Allston, and gets some fairly subtle effects: "If Allston had read" a book Brooks has, he might have felt differently; one of Allston's comments "strikes me as intemperate, to say the least"; Allston agreed with a view of Brooks' and his informed agreement confirmed Brooks in it, etc. (The name, incidentally, would seem to be a weighting in favor of Brooks' Puritan qualities — Oliver (Cromwell?) All-stone.)

The Opinions of Oliver Allston repudiated the early works for "ignorance" and "brashness" and went on to achieve an ignorance and brashness the early works had never even approximated. The new criteria, explicitly applied, are the moral strait jackets of Tolstoy's *What is Art?*: our literature is sick, off-centre and reflects the death-drive, it must be "rebuked," (a key word); writers are no longer the voices of the people; "true literature transmits sound feeling"; it is time to restore the American classics; Henry James was "fatuous," a "guilty child disloyal to his mother"; Rimbaud "a little neurasthenic wretch"; Joyce a "sick Irish Jesuit," his works "trivial," "salacious," "bad-smelling," "the ash of a burnt-out cigar"; Laforgue was "a naughty brat," Proust "a spoiled child," and so on. "What made Proust an authority on love?" he asks, and we might answer: the same thing that made Brooks, who mentions in the book Allston's breakdown, his neurosis, his time in an English sanitarium, an authority on mental health — its absence. As Brooks gets more and more worked up about the state of contemporary literature, the Allston pose drops away and he speaks with his own voice, by now a remarkably shrill one.

Brooks had finally worked his biographical method through to its logical implication: if criticism is the capturing of personality, if the critic writes only of authors for whom he has an affinity, and if writing is determined by the author's life, Brooks can encompass all of value in criticism by exploring the roots of his writings in his own life, by intuiting his own personality. "A man who has the courage of his platitudes is always a successful man," Allston noted in his journal, reversing the procedure and doing an obituary for Van Wyck Brooks.

2

Although flawed, *The Ordeal of Mark Twain* is Brooks' best book, if not his only one in which the biographical method succeeds, and it is worth examining in some detail. Its thesis is that Twain's bitterness

was the effect of a certain miscarriage in his creative life, a balked personality, an arrested development of which he himself was almost wholly unaware, but which for him destroyed the meaning of life.

The two related factors which arrested Twain's creative development were: on the personal level, the excessive influence of his mother and her passionate at-

tachment to him, later succeeded by his wife and daughter as mother-symbols; and on the social level, the Gilded Age in America with its false standards of gentility, and its demand on the writer that he help the tired businessman to relax or be broken by it. There is probably a substantial portion of truth in both factors, but to fit Twain perfectly into the Procrustean bed of his thesis, Brooks is forced to stretch and lop off, that is, to underestimate Twain's accomplishments vastly, calling him the author of works "of inferior quality" appealing to "rudimentary minds," while at the same time vastly overrating his potential, insisting that he could have been a Voltaire, Swift, or Cervantes. It is true that only a few of Twain's books still warrant reading, and the rest now tend to seem both tedious and puerile, but it is equally true that those few, particularly *Huckleberry Finn* and *Life on the Mississippi*, are first-rate literature. When Brooks assumes that Twain, under other circumstances, would have been capable of writing *Gulliver's Travels* or *Don Quixote* he is wrong, and when he assumes that what he was capable of writing, *Huck Finn*, is not worth bothering about, he is foolish. But the central insight of the book, its contrast between the potential of Twain's sensibility and the tawdriness of most of what he accomplished, is sound, although certainly exaggerated.

Much of the book is very perceptive: Brooks' recognition that the symbol of the Mississippi pilot was the archetype of freedom and creative satisfaction, even art, for Twain (just as it satisfies Brooks by being on a middle plane between idealist and practical man, highbrow and lowbrow, Edwards and Franklin); his awareness that Twain's later receiving in bed was a regressive pattern, like Proust's cork-lined room; his identification of Twain's concern with dual personality in such stories as "Those Extraordinary Twins" as essentially cycloid; his observation that *The Gilded Age* is essentially a discussion of business in religious imagery; etc. The book also contains a good measure of foolishness, distortion, an oversimplified use of Marx, Veblen, Freud, and any theoretical club that comes to hand, even a rather corny moral to the effect that since the system did this to Twain, writers, revolt! But the total effect is overwhelmingly useful, and the book is at once a tribute to the effectiveness of biographical criticism within its limits and an indictment of the later Brooks for making so little of it.

Perhaps the greatest weakness of the book is Brooks' absolute and lifelong humorlessness (he once suggested that Adams should have called his autobiography not *The Education* but *The Betrayal* of Henry Adams), and his characteristic device is analyzing as a serious statement a Twain joke of which he has missed the point. He prints Twain's comic announcement, on taking over an editorship of *The Buffalo Express*, that "I am not going to hurt the paper deliberately and intentionally at any time" with the comment "Never, surely, was a creative will more innocently, more painlessly surrendered than in those words"; he quotes Twain's introduction to *Huck Finn*: "Persons attempting to find a motive in this narrative will be prosecuted; persons attempting to find a moral in it will be banished; persons attempting to find a plot in it will be shot" with the comment: "He feels so secure of himself that he can

actually challenge the censor to accuse him of having a motive!"

One of the most interesting features of *The Ordeal of Mark Twain* is the revised and reset edition of it Brooks published in 1933, without any introduction or comment. For the thirteen years between he had been under fire for the book, from Bernard De Voto in particular, and when De Voto's book *Mark Twain's America*, largely an attempt to demolish Brooks' book, was in galley, a revision of Brooks' book was announced. I have not read the book through for alterations, but the changes and rewritings that emerge from even a casual comparison are almost unbelievable. On page 58, Brooks inserts a parenthetical remark, before telling a story, explaining away Twain's later contradiction of it on the grounds of Twain's treacherous memory. On page 61, he omits some sob stuff about Twain breaking his mother's heart. On page 63, he drops some strong statements about Twain's being inhibited. On page 92, he omits: "New England, in short, and with New England the whole spiritual life of the nation, had passed into the condition of a neurotic anaemia in which it has remained so largely to this day." On page 95, he changes "a vast unconscious conspiracy actuated all America against the creative life" to "a sort of unconscious conspiracy."

On page 96 he goes to town: he omits a half-page attack on American writers as spineless, dependant and avocational; changes "Essentially, America was not happy" to "Was America really happier, during the Gilded Age, than any other nation?"; drops the two following major statements:

it was a nation like other nations, and one that had no folk-music, no folk-art, no folk-poetry, or next to none, to express it, to console it;

it was a horde-life, a herd-life, an epoch without sun or stars, the twilight of a human spirit that had nothing upon which to feed but the living waters of Camden and the dried manna of Concord:

and, after a reference to the American joy of action, omits "that left them old and worn at fifty-five." On page 98 he omits a "moral judgment" that the devil had already marked Twain out for destruction. On page 104 he changes "he always yielded in the end" to "he always yielded goodnaturedly in the end." On page 109 he hedges on two statements, toning them down with modifiers like "a suggestion of," "whether he was conscious of them or not," etc. On page 131 he changes "the recognized American game" and "the recognized American rules" to "the recognized game" and the "recognized rules." On page 143 he changes "this moral surrender — shall we call it?" to "this capitulation" (obviously, we shall not call it). On page 151 he inserts new evidence to reinforce a dubious case for Twain's cringing servility. On page 154 he omits a metaphor about Twain as a sleeping Samson, "yielding his locks to that simple Delilah his wife." On page 161 he omits an anecdote about Twain sneaking a smoke, the point of which is that Twain is an "Incorrigible naughty boy!"

On page 180, he omits a crack Twain made about Mr. Rockefeller Jr. and Joseph's Egyptian policy. On page 182, he omits a page and a half of material

sharply critical of Twain as a self-recognized failed writer and a businessman of letters. On page 190 he omits two sentences, obviously unpatriotic, invidiously comparing Twain's mind to that of any "French or English writer of rank." On page 192 he changes "I should like to point out" to "One might almost say." On page 196, patience and conscience, formerly "of the essence of all art," now "belong to the creative life also." On page 261 he inserts a defense of one of his statements against Ludwig Lewisohn's contrary view. On page 278, he omits a crack at New England snobbery and the suggestion that he might be exaggerating the significance of an anecdote. On page 284, "the wiles of simple folk" become, not "the most successful of all," but "the most complicated of all." On page 292, the sentence "It is perhaps the most pitifully abject confession ever written by a famous writer" becomes "It is a very sad confession, surely, to have come from a famous author." On page 315, he omits the sentences: "Do we ask, then, why Mark Twain 'detested' novels? It was because he had been able to produce only one himself, and that a failure."

These are only a few of the innumerable major changes, not counting those that merely corrected grammar, eliminated some of the repetition or substituted a better word. The pattern they add up to is of wild statements having to be toned down by the more cautious older writer, hedging, backing out of misstatements, weaseling on contradictions, a new servility and pseudo-patriotism that omits slights to America, New England, and John D. Rockefeller Jr., and a new caution prepared to discard a good part of his thesis under attack. It is not a pretty picture.

It is obvious that Bernard De Voto had caught him with his pants down. De Voto's book, when it appeared, cast grave doubts on what he correctly identified as the cornerstone of Brooks' theory, the deathbed scene of Twain's father; recognized accurately that Brooks thought Twain wanted to be Shelley; fairly charged Brooks with "parlor" psychoanalysis based on inadequate knowledge, with hasty, unscientific procedures, and with shifting offhand from Freud to Adler to Jung as each of them served his purpose; hit on the basic charge against the book, that "Mr. Brooks dislikes humor"; and finally, found Brooks guilty of contradictions, distortions, misrepresentations and unwarranted assumptions on page after page — (only some of them corrected or modified in the revision). De Voto's *Mark Twain's America* is a stupid and ignorant book, full of the most incredible howlers, its literary judgments alternately provincial and silly (Moby Dick is "chaotic," "structureless"), its positive theories of Twain childish (Twain's neurosis was due to the frightening Negro stories he heard as a child), its bias all-pervasive (De Voto takes out his venom against Brooks impartially on Emerson, Alcott, Holmes, Whittier, and any Abolitionists foolish enough to want to free "the childlike race of slaves"), and its style the smart-aleck cantankerousness of Mencken and Thomas Beer, diluted with water. Nevertheless, in regard to Brooks' book De Voto is more often right than wrong, and his book serves as an irritating but valuable corrective.

The controversy had a comic sequel in 1944, when De Voto, a decade

crustier, wrote a book called *The Literary Fallacy*, a study of the sins of contemporary writers, which devoted almost half its 175 pages to attacking Van Wyck Brooks. The attack boiled down to the charge that Brooks hadn't begun to hate modern literature until 1940, whereas De Voto had been hating it at least since 1920. As usual, it made a number of accurate criticisms of Brooks, documenting his early ignorance of American literature at a time when he was most eloquent about it, and polishing off the New England books with a rare perception: "These writers seldom fall in love, and one feels that only those have children whose children also became writers." The rest of the book is brash and ignorant: De Voto invents a writer named "Falkner" (after the third appearance of the name, it is obviously no misprint), finds Farrell "the most considerable American novelist developed during the 1930's," finds Alfred Kazin's *On Native Grounds* "the best study of modern American literature so far written," dismisses Eliot as an epistemologist, and finally ends up by reproaching our writers for convincing Hitler that America was decadent, and for never mentioning in their work the man who founded the National Park Service, and the work American medicine did on the problem of burns, both of which he regards as more important aspects of American culture than all this literary nonsense. The "literary fallacy" De Voto accuses our writers of holding is the belief:

that a culture may be understood and judged solely by means of its literature, that literature embodies truly and completely both the values and the content of a culture, that literature is the highest expression of a culture, that literature is the measure of life, and finally that life is subordinate to literature.

(As usual, De Voto had the goods on Brooks, who once wrote: "And so if we really care for the conservation of our natural resources, those that essentially matter, we shall have a more than ordinary concern for the welfare of American literature, in which largely lies whatever hope our civilization has.") Applied generally to American writers, however, the charge had little point and made little sense, and De Voto's book assumed a number of logical fallacies much more substantial than the one he called "literary." A few of them are:

That writers can freely decide what they want to do and what they want to write about.

That the aim of writing is to portray reality, especially democratic, American reality.

That the best writers are those who make the most realistic portraits.

That an entire body of literature can be "wrong."

That writers freely produce their own cultural climate.

That the literary term "culture" and the anthropological term "culture" are the same term.

That writers or critics can "escape" if they wish.

That the more a critic "knows" the better a critic he is.

Etc. etc.

I do not believe that Brooks ever replied to *The Literary Fallacy*, but Sinclair Lewis, who had also been attacked, rushed to Brooks' defense in an article entitled "Fools, Liars and Mr. De Voto" in the April 15, 1944 issue of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, writing with his usual bad-temper. Seeing De Voto, with a bad-tempered, stupid and largely erroneous book clubbing Brooks for a bad-tempered, stupid and largely erroneous book with which he was in substantial agreement, and Lewis rushing into the fray with a bad-tempered, stupid and largely erroneous article, all the person seriously concerned with literature could do was say with the pioneer woman whose husband was attacked by a bear: "Go it husband, go it bear," hope that they kill each other off as soon as possible, and wash his hands of the whole disorderly mess.

3

The tradition of biographical criticism Brooks inherits is a substantial one. Almost any literary biography is to some extent critical, just as almost every critical study is to some extent biographical. The first real English literary biography, Izaak Walton's *Lives of Donne, Herbert, Etc.* is not much concerned with their poetry, "honest Izaak" not having much of a taste for metaphysical verse, but a century later, in Dr. Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*, the contribution the life makes to an understanding of the work is neatly assayed, and in such places as the discussion of the relation between Rochester's moral character and his verse in the "Life of Rochester," actual biographical criticism emerges. In Scott's *Lives of the Novelists* half a century later the tradition is further developed, and the fine bourgeois character of Richardson's novels, say, is fully explored in terms of his rather prim middle-class life. A few years later, with Carlyle (who saw history as "the essence of innumerable Biographies") and Macaulay it is a fully developed form (although Macaulay's finest essay, the merciless dissection of Francis Bacon, in the last analysis does not succeed in finding the relation, which seems rather obvious to us, between Bacon as a trimmer and Bacon as a utilitarian philosopher). The method even works out to a *reductio ad absurdum*, at about the same time, in De Quincey's study of Coleridge, which sees the poetry almost entirely in terms of kleptomania, an unfortunate marriage, overindulgence in narcotics, and any other personal factors De Quincey is able to find or invent.

The great development of biographical criticism, however, came not in England but in France, with Sainte-Beuve's *Causeries du Lundi*, beginning in the middle of the last century. He almost perfectly defined the method with his statement:

Real criticism, as I define it, consists in studying each person, that is, each author, each talent, according to the conditions of his nature, in order to make a vivid and pregnant description of him so that he can later be classified and put in his proper place in the hierarchy of art.

This principle of the identity of the man and his work led Sainte-Beuve into a rather elaborate study of the private lives of the literary: their physical appearance, their economic position, their amours, their vices, the elaborate trivia of their daily routine. From this jumble he produced what few of the literary gossips who have followed his method since ever produced: real insights into the man and his work. On occasion, as in his essay on Gibbon, he pushed the realm of biography into an exhaustive study of the relationship between the author and his times and environment, anticipating the direction the method would later take with his chief disciple, Taine. Taine began as a biographical critic like Sainte-Beuve (and his treatment of Pope largely in terms of his physical infirmities in the *History of English Literature* shows that he never wholly renounced it) but soon converted the method into an emphasis on *race, moment, milieu*, and thus became chiefly a social determinist critic of literature, in the tradition largely represented by Marxist criticism in our time.

A line of thought essentially German was added to the brew. Goethe had announced that art springs from disease, is a kind of blood-letting. Schopenhauer turned this to an emphasis on the artist's suffering, and Nietzsche added the modification that the art is not only the product of the disease, but a kind of record of it, that every philosophy is a confession, "a species of involuntary and unconscious autobiography." Max Nordau made news of the doctrine that genius is a form of neurosis in his book *Degeneration*, and recently Thomas Mann has been most active in defining art as produced out of sickness and neurosis, the way the pearl is produced from the oyster, with that art then at once the product of that sickness, its record, and its transcendence. This is, of course, a variant of the "wound and the bow" theory that Edmund Wilson has made his own, but with the emphasis taken off disease and neurosis, reduced to a simple determinism of the nature of the life over the works, it is the characteristic assumption of present-day biographical criticism.

Of this criticism, there are a number of special contemporary forms. Henry James had one almost exclusive with him, the private history of a work of art: what he was doing, what he heard, what he said, what he thought of, during its genesis. Following Lytton Strachey, who dealt chiefly with historical figures, Virginia Woolf has developed a method of her own in *The Common Reader* and *The Second Common Reader* for making literary figures, schools, and periods come alive by vivid portraits and vignettes. She summons up their atmosphere, their quality of life, their very aroma. It is not analysis, not quite biography, not quite criticism, perhaps it is a kind of closet-drama, but whatever it is, it is charming and invaluable. Herbert Read, in his biography of Wordsworth, reversed the method ironically and set out to analyze Wordsworth's poetry "to explain his life," the way social critics like Taine, implicitly, and T. K. Whipple in this country, explicitly, have studied literature as a clue to society in their literary history, rather than vice-versa. Other contemporary critics who have relied heavily on the biographical method are Eric Bentley in his *A Century of Hero Worship*, F. O. Matthiessen in his *Sarah Orne Jewett* and *American Renaissance*, and Peter Quennell in his

Baudelaire and the Symbolists, *The Profane Virtues*, and several books on Byron. We have also had a number of literary biographies that are also valuable critical studies, including Georg Brandes' books on Goethe, Voltaire, Shakespeare, and Nietzsche, Gissing's and Chesterton's studies of Dickens, Newton Arvin's *Hawthorne* and *Whitman*, Joseph Wood Krutch's *Samuel Johnson*, Lionel Trilling's *Matthew Arnold* and *E. M. Forster*, and Philip Horton's *Hart Crane*. Biographical studies that have been chiefly psychoanalytic will be treated elsewhere.

* * * * *

One of the great problems of the biographical method has been the problem of frankness, when personal information stops being relevant and becomes simply prying into the private life of the author. If an important modern poet has an insane wife, is that information relevant? If the decision is that it is relevant and is intimately bound up with his work, is it ethical or even possible to print it? The decision usually made is that scandalous revelations can be printed about authors safely dead, so that Wilde's syphilis, de Gourmont's leprosy, and Dostoyevsky's epilepsy can now be discussed critically, but that similar information about living authors can only be used if they have themselves publicized it, as Gide did his homosexuality. Homosexuality is, as a matter of fact, the chief problem, since it is widespread in contemporary letters, almost unmentionable in print, very easy to detect in a writer's work, and a very important critical consideration in relation to that work. Brooks' problem with John Addington Symonds, who is unmistakably homosexual in his writings and confessedly homosexual in his letter to Whitman, is a case in point, but perhaps most typical is the case of Whitman himself.

Whitman's homosexuality was first asserted by Europeans, Eduard Bertz in Germany, Jean Catel in France, the physician W. C. Rivers in England, and was picked up most enthusiastically in America, for the purpose of discounting Whitman as a democratic symbol, by Mark Van Doren in 1935. Biographers sympathetic to Whitman like Newton Arvin and Henry Seidel Canby have been forced to admit the charge, although still disputing the possibility of overt practice, and recently in *The New Republic* Malcolm Cowley published a fully documented and absolutely convincing case for Whitman as a practicing homosexual. In all his writing on Whitman, to my knowledge, Brooks has not so much as mentioned the suspicion of homosexuality, and it will be interesting to see what course he takes in his forthcoming and concluding volume of the literary history on the Age of Whitman and Melville, or even to speculate on why the projected study of Whitman was suddenly dropped.

The amazing thing about these few recent and embattled recognitions of Whitman's homosexuality, which have hardly penetrated even to the colleges and certainly not to the Book Club public, is how unmistakable the thing is to anyone bothering to read the poetry, and how vital its recognition is to the study of the poetry. If the Whitman battle has barely been won, the other battles on American writers have not yet begun. Almost every major American writer has been a sexual problem of one sort or another: the extreme homo-

eroticism of Melville, the frigidity or repression or prolonged virginity of Emerson, Thoreau and Hawthorne; the probable impotence of Henry James, etc. The pattern of major American literature has been almost a pattern of sexual maladjustment, and every attempt to study the literature and blink the problem has been inevitably foredoomed to failure.

There is a sign of hope in the recent increase in critical frankness, typified by the Cowley article on Whitman, particularly in regard to homosexuality. Gide's frank confession in his autobiography and Philip Horton's frank handling of the problem in his biography of his friend Hart Crane are excellent signs. As far back as 1929, in an essay in *The New American Caravan*, Yvor Winters had the courage, combined with his usual facility for drawing the wrong conclusions, to write of "the depressing but steady increase of sexual perversion, not only in our 'art centers,' but in nearly all our universities, large and small, with the ultimate spiritual dishonesty and sterility that it seems in nearly all cases to entail." In the thirties, in an essay called "Writers and Morals," C. Day Lewis drew a much more sensible conclusion, speaking of the contemporary English writer and the factors which tend to "drive him to homosexuality as a refuge from responsibilities. This also results in his written work in a certain evasion—a leading up to a dramatic climax or a moral judgment and then shying away from it." Eric Bentley, in his book *A Century of Hero Worship*, was remarkably frank about the importance of such sexual factors as Carlyle's impotence, Stefan George's homosexuality, and D. H. Lawrence's homoeroticism. Perhaps most significant, a relatively old-school French professor at Yale named Henri Peyre, in his recent book *Writers and Their Critics*, felt the climate of opinion was strong enough for him to venture a list of writers who have been insane (Tasso, Nerval, Hölderlin, Lenau, Nietzsche, Hugo Wolf), epileptic or otherwise seriously diseased (Pascal, Flaubert, Dostoyevsky), either homosexual or preoccupied in their work with homosexuality (Socrates, Plato, Sophocles, and many other Greeks, Catullus, Virgil, Michelangelo, Leonardo, Shakespeare, Winckelmann, Platen, Wilde, Verlaine, Rimbaud, George, Whitman, Proust, Gide, Crane) and so on. When other critics have the courage to face these lists (with a few additions, Blake and Rousseau among the insane, Hopkins and Samuel Butler among the homosexuals, Swift anywhere he turns out to fit, etc.) and their implications, biographical criticism can come out of the fog of suggestion and innuendo and get to work. One of the things it will have to renounce is any moral implications in this information. Despite Winters and others of his view, the fact that a writer is homosexual does not mean his writing will be dishonest and sterile, or so the example of Shakespeare and Sophocles should argue. All it does mean, as does the information that he is insane, diseased, alcoholic, impotent, or otherwise abnormal, is that this abnormality will be a major factor in determining the form and character of his work. It is quite possible that a new debunking, Procrustean, or other nut critical school could arise on the basis of a new frankness about the private lives of writers, but since it is almost impossible for it to do any worse than similar schools that already exist without the frankness, the

attempt is certainly worth making. It is not likely that Van Wyck Brooks will be in the vanguard.

4

A number of other matters not directly related to the biographical method are worth discussing in connection with Brooks. The first is his debt to his close friend Randolph Bourne, the brilliant and promising young radical critic who died in 1918 at the age of thirty-two. Both *America's Coming of Age* and *Letters and Leadership* were to a large extent inspired by Bourne's crusading fury, and with Bourne's untimely death Brooks' ardor quickly cooled. He persuaded Brooks of the reality of a class struggle in America, helped to turn him from dilute European aestheticism to a preoccupation with American literature (he was not responsible for the provincialism this finally developed into) and, had he lived, he would unquestionably have been a major American critic, just as Brooks would have been a better one.

Brooks has been influential enough almost to have had a school. His chief disciples were Waldo Frank and Lewis Mumford, but he had a substantial influence on Paul Rosenfeld and Matthew Josephson, and for a while on T. K. Whipple and F. O. Matthiessen (although the former eventually broke away to become a Marxist critic and the latter broke away early, after *Sarah Orne Jewett*, to substitute serious aesthetic analysis for biographical and social oversimplification. Frank was chiefly a critical moralist, writing sermons and exhortations from literary springboards. Lewis Mumford, on the other hand, was in many respects a better critic than Brooks, his *The Golden Day* is a better-informed, more perceptive, and more critical book than the Brooks' New England volumes it parallels, and Brooks in recent years has become increasingly *his* disciple, adopting his ideas and celebrating his genius and "health." Matthew Josephson, except for one survey of American literature in *Portrait of the Artist as American*, confined his work to French literary figures, where his basic good sense kept him from many of the Brooksonian excesses. Paul Rosenfeld, perhaps the most independent of the group, wrote only two volumes of literary portraits, *Port of New York* and *Men Seen*, like Brooks' centering chiefly around personality, but much more sharply perceptive; much more interested, like his other master, Hunecker, in popularizing unknown moderns; and much more sensitive to aesthetic values. The most curious thing about the Brooks' school, while it held together, was how aware all of them were of Brooks' failings and limitations (although a certain amount of projection must be assumed here). The most incisive criticism of Brooks yet written can be found in the works of Mumford, Frank, Josephson, and Rosenfeld, particularly the last, written at the period of their most passionate discipleship.

The principal view that Brooks succeeded in imposing on his school was the idea that America after the Civil War had been a retarding cultural environment which crippled its victims the artists in various ways. With the substitution of "altered" for "crippled" and "products" for "victims" this would

have been a sound and usable doctrine of the intimate relationship between an artist and his society; in Brooks' form it was a crude generalization that led to inevitable distortion in every literary judgment. This half-truth was not only imposed on Brooks' school, but it influenced the mechanical Marxists like Granville Hicks and V. F. Calverton, who added Brooks' excesses to their own and simply parroted his over-simplifications of men like James and Twain, it took in almost a whole critical generation to some extent, and it influenced a number of creative writers who should have known better, among them Dreiser and Anderson.

One of the most curious aspects of Van Wyck Brooks' work is the way he has written all his literary studies as elaborate footnotes to his manifestoes. Both the *Twain*, published in 1920, and the *James*, published in 1925, are documentation for a single sentence published in *America's Coming-of-Age* in 1915, with all their distortions implicit in it:

In effect, an explanation of American literature will show, I think, that those of our writers who have possessed a vivid personal genius have been paralyzed by the want of a social background, while those who have possessed a vivid social genius have been equally unable to develop their personalities.

James is the first side of that coin, Twain the other. The affirmation of the next period, beginning with *The Life of Emerson* and continuing through the New England books, is all contained in a question asked in *The Literary Life in America* in 1921:

How can one explain why, at a time when America, in every other department of life, was more distinctly colonial than it is now, American literature commanded the full respect of Americans, while today, when the colonial tradition is vanishing all about us, it so little commands their respect that they go after any strange god from England?

(It is thoroughly characteristic of Brooks' prissiness, incidentally, to omit the verb from "whoring after strange gods"). The last manifesto was *On Literature Today* in 1941, and allowing for the normal Brooks lag of anything up to a decade, it will be interesting to see what new books stem from one or another of its oracular sentences.

Brooks has a number of limitations on which he has to some extent capitalized. One of the most obvious is that, like Edmund Wilson, he is a critic who fundamentally doesn't like poetry, but, unlike Edmund Wilson, he has never been at all interested in writing about it and has never written any since college (and that quite poor). "Could Wells write a poem?" he asks rhetorically in his book on Wells, and the question might just as easily be phrased "Could Brooks write a poem?" with the same sad negative answer. Another related limitation is the lack of a broad enough general culture to permit him to handle European literature (although he and his wife have translated at least thirty works from the French). Since *The Malady of the Ideal* in 1913 he has writ-

ten nothing whatsoever on any European writer, and since the *Symonds* and *Wells* books in 1914 and 1915, with the exception of a short piece on Swinburne, whom he met in London, and John Butler Yeats, whom he knew in New York, he has written nothing on any British writer or artist. In *The Opinions of Oliver Allston*, Brooks defends this limitation of Allston's, first with a quotation from Sainte-Beuve (who wrote a good deal about foreign writers):

literary criticism has its full worth and originality only when it applies itself to subjects of which it possesses, through immediate contact and from a long way back, the source, the surrounding facts and all the circumstances.

and then with a misunderstood quotation from Yeats:

One can only reach out to the universe with a gloved hand — that hand is one's nation, the only thing that one knows even a little about.

He comments:

This was a principle that Allston followed in all his work. He wrote, I might say, exclusively of American subjects; for, although he had written of foreign subjects, he had begun with American subjects — and how could he ever cease to be interested in them?

Another limitation Brooks has converted into something meritorious is his great dependance on his own notebooks, journals, recorded phrases, anecdotes and aphorisms. He is constantly living off his own fat: some of his Emerson material was used in "Emerson: Six Episodes," in *The Life of Emerson*, in *The Flowering of New England* and its two successors, and in random essays; all his old anecdotes turn up again and again, sometimes in the same words, sometimes altered because Brooks has thrown away the note and forgotten to whom Greeley said "You can be fixing me some." He is probably the most repetitious American author since Thomas Wolfe died, and a book like *The Ordeal of Mark Twain* has almost every anecdote or quotation repeated at least twice, and one of them, a line from Herbert Croly, used four times by page 143. (Some of these repetitions were eliminated in the revised edition.) Brooks has converted this remarkable economy of material into a virtue, praising Allston for his habit of keeping and using journals like such New England worthies as Emerson and Thoreau, and in fact in his utilization-of-by-products economy *The Opinions of Oliver Allston* was a major factor, since it gave him an opportunity to print, without alteration, any scraps from the journals he had not been able to use anywhere else, thus getting good fat sausage out of the last scrap of hide, hair, horn, tail and tripe.

Brooks' attitude toward two of the principal intellectual developments of our time, Marxism and psychoanalysis, has been more or less one of biting the hand that fed him. He has used Marx at every opportunity, generally in

the oversimplified and vulgarized form of seeing the artist's function as direct social service: Twain was useful to the businessman by relaxing his mind, was thus an aid to efficiency; Longfellow sped the pioneer on his way; Barnum fooled the public and thus sharpened commercial instincts; etc. He has, however, always attacked Marx, identifying Marxism as mechanical economic determinism and calling himself an *idealist* socialist. (His most impassioned political statement in the Allston book: "communism cannot go far in this country because Americans are *naturally* free. We have a great deal more to lose than chains" has a little of the tone of the old lady's rejoinder to the revivalist that no one who was born in Boston need be born again.) On psychoanalysis, after a lifetime of filching half-understood insights from Freud, Adler, Jung and anyone else who came to hand for his biographies, he announced in Allston: "The method of psychoanalysis, in the writing of biographies, has a very limited value, and I believe that, once having passed, it will not be used again."

It would be interesting to see Brooks' biographical method applied to Van Wyck Brooks: growing up, of old New England and New York Dutch stock, in exile in Plainfield, New Jersey; the influence of Harvard and the two stories and the poor poetry he wrote there; the oppression of working on the staff of *The Standard Dictionary* and *World's Work* magazine; the exile in England, lecturing for the Workers' Educational Association; the neurosis, breakdown, and sanitarium his friend Allston experienced; the friendship with the terribly crippled Bourne and Bourne's death; his first Literary Guild success, followed by a popular triumph no American literary critic had ever known when *The Flowering of New England* won the Limited Editions Club's gold medal "for the book most likely to attain the stature of a classic" and the Pulitzer Prize, and The Book-of-the-Month Club took *New England: Indian Summer*. *The Ordeal of Van Wyck Brooks*, it might be called, or *The Pilgrimage*, or *The Betrayal*. Meanwhile, until this is done, anyone who wants an epitaph for Brooks might do worse than take as his model the one that Brooks wrote for Lowell, certainly with himself in mind:

If the fresh and courageous note of the *Fable for Critics* has died out of the picture, the note of the young man who spoke his mind, regardless of what anyone thought or said, the critic hitting and missing, with the rashness of the young, often hitting well and always trusting his own opinions—if this note has vanished, another note has taken its place. This later Lowell has abandoned a role for which he was ill-fitted by nature and training. He has stooped to conquer, but he conquers. Take him on his own ground! Do not remind him of his old pretensions. Do not embarrass him with questions. Forget the radical views of his earlier days. Let him rejoice in royalists and churchmen, lovers of good ale and seasoned pipes who would have had small use for Abolition. Do not trip him up with insinuations about his inconsistencies and his timid aversions.

With the substitution of a few words, and perhaps less charity, it would do.

J. F. POWERS:

The Valiant Woman

They had come to the dessert in a dinner that was a shambles. "Well, John," Father Nulty said, turning away from Mrs. Stoner and to Father Firman, long gone silent at his own table. "You've got the bishop coming for confirmations next week."

"Yes," Mrs. Stoner cut in, "and for dinner. And if he don't eat any more than he did last year——"

Father Firman, in a rare moment, faced it. "Mrs. Stoner, the bishop is not well. You know that."

"And after I fixed that fine dinner and all." Mrs. Stoner pouted in Father Nulty's direction.

"I wouldn't feel bad about it, Mrs. Stoner," Father Nulty said. "He never eats much anywhere."

"It's funny. And that new Mrs. Allers said he ate just fine when he was there," Mrs. Stoner argued, and then spit out, "but she's a damned liar!"

Father Nulty, unsettled but trying not to show it, said, "Who's Mrs. Allers?"

"She's at Holy Cross," Mrs. Stoner said.

"She's the housekeeper," Father Firman added, thinking Mrs. Stoner made it sound as though Mrs. Allers were the pastor there.

"I swear I don't know what to do about the dinner this year," Mrs. Stoner said.

Father Firman moaned. "Just do as you've always done, Mrs. Stoner."

"Huh! And have it all to throw out! Is that any way to do?"

"Is there any dessert?" Father Firman asked coldly.

Mrs. Stoner leaped up from the table and bolted into the kitchen, mumbling. She came back with a birthday cake. She plunged it in the center of the table. She found a big wooden match in her apron pocket and thrust it at Father Firman.

"I don't like this bishop," she said. "I never did. And the way he went and cut poor Ellen Kennedy out of Father Doolin's will!"

She went back into the kitchen.

"Didn't they talk a lot of filth about Doolin and the housekeeper?" Father Nulty asked.

"I should think they did," Father Firman said. "All because he took her to the movies on Sunday night. After he died and the bishop cut her out of the will, though I hear he gives her a pension privately, they talked about the bishop."

"I don't like this bishop at all," Mrs. Stoner said, appearing with a cake knife. "Bishop Doran—there was the man!"

"We know," Father Firman said. "All man and all priest."

"He did know real estate," Father Nulty said.

Father Firman struck the match.

"Not on the chair!" Mrs. Stoner cried, too late.

Father Firman set the candle burning — it was suspiciously large and yellow, like a blessed one, but he could not be sure. They watched the fluttering flame.

"I'm forgetting the lights!" Mrs. Stoner said, and got up to turn them off. She went into the kitchen again.

The priests had a moment of silence in the candlelight.

"Happy birthday, John," Father Nulty said softly. "Is it fifty-nine you are?"

"As if you didn't know, Frank," Father Firman said, "and you the same but one."

Father Nulty smiled, the old gold of his incisors shining in the flickering light, his collar whiter in the dark, and raised his glass of water, which would have been wine or better in the bygone days, and toasted Father Firman.

"Many of 'em, John."

"Blow it out," Mrs. Stoner said, returning to the room. She waited by the light switch for Father Firman to blow out the candle.

Mrs. Stoner, who ate no desserts, began to clear the dishes into the kitchen, and the priests, finishing their cake and coffee in a hurry, went to sit in the study.

Father Nulty offered a cigar.

"John?"

"My ulcers, Frank."

"Ah, well, you're better off." Father Nulty lit the cigar and crossed his long black legs. "Fish Frawley has got him a Filipino, John. Did you hear?"

Father Firman leaned forward, interested. "He got rid of the woman he had?"

"He did. It seems she snooped."

"Snooped, eh?"

"She did. And gossiped. Fish introduced two town boys to her, said, 'Would you think these boys were my nephews?' That's all, and the next week the paper had it that his two nephews were visiting him from Erie. After that, he let her believe he was going East to see his parents, though both are dead. The paper carried the story. Fish returned and made a sermon out of it. Then he got the Filipino."

Father Firman squirmed with pleasure in his chair. "That's like Fish, Frank. He can do that." He stared at the tips of his fingers bleakly. "You could never get a Filipino to come to a place like this."

"Probably not," Father Nulty said. "Fish is pretty close to Minneapolis. Ah, say, do you remember the trick he played on us all in Marmion Hall?"

"That I'll not forget!" Father Firman's eyes remembered. "Getting up New Year's morning and finding the toilet seats all painted!"

"*Happy Circumcision!* Hah!" Father Nulty had a coughing fit.

When he had got himself together again, a mosquito came and sat on his wrist. He watched it a moment before bringing his heavy hand down. He raised his hand slowly, viewed the dead mosquito, and sent it spinning with

a plunk of his middle finger.

"Only the female bites," he said.

"I didn't know that," Father Firman said.

"Ah, yes . . ."

Mrs. Stoner entered the study and sat down with some sewing — Father Firman's black socks.

She smiled pleasantly at Father Nulty. "And what do you think of the atom bomb, Father?"

"Not much," Father Nulty said.

Mrs. Stoner had stopped smiling. Father Firman yawned.

Mrs. Stoner served up another: "Did you read about this communist convert, Father?"

"He's been in the Church before," Father Nulty said, "and so it's not a conversion, Mrs. Stoner."

"No? Well, I already got him down on my list of Monsignor's converts."

"It's better than a conversion, Mrs. Stoner, for there is more rejoicing in heaven over the return of . . . uh, he that was lost, Mrs. Stoner, is found."

"And that congresswoman, Father?"

"Yes. A convert — she."

"And Henry Ford's grandson, Father. I got him down."

"Yes, to be sure."

Father Firman yawned, this time audibly, and held his jaw.

"But he's one only by marriage, Father," Mrs. Stoner said. "I always say you got to watch those kind."

"Indeed you do, but a convert nonetheless, Mrs. Stoner. Remember, Cardinal Newman himself was one."

Mrs. Stoner was unimpressed. "I see where Henry Ford's making steering wheels out of soybeans, Father."

"I didn't see that."

"I read it in the *Reader's Digest* or some place."

"Yes, well . . ." Father Nulty rose and held his hand out to Father Firman. "John," he said. "It's been good."

"I heard Hirohito's next," Mrs. Stoner said, returning to converts.

"Let's wait and see, Mrs. Stoner," Father Nulty said.

The priests walked to the door.

"You know where I live, John."

"Yes. Come again, Frank. Good night."

Father Firman watched Father Nulty go down the walk to his car at the curb. He hooked the screen door and turned off the porch light. He hesitated at the foot of the stairs, suddenly moved to go to bed. But he went back into the study.

"Phew!" Mrs. Stoner said. "I thought he'd never go. Here it is after eight o'clock."

Father Firman sat down in his rocking chair. "I don't see him often," he said.

"I give up!" Mrs. Stoner exclaimed, flinging the holey socks upon the horse-

hair sofa. "I'd swear you had a nail in your shoe."

"I told you I looked."

"Well, you ought to look again. And cut your toenails, why don't you? Haven't I got enough to do?"

Father Firman scratched in his coat pocket for a pill, found one, swallowed it. He let his head sink back against the chair and closed his eyes. He could hear her moving about the room, making the preparations; and how he knew them — the fumbling in the drawer for a pencil with a point, the rip of the page from his daily calendar, and finally the leg of the card table sliding up against his leg.

He opened his eyes. She yanked the floor lamp alongside the table, setting the bead fringe tinkling on the shade, and pulled up her chair on the other side. She sat down and smiled at him for the first time that day. Now she was happy.

She swept up the cards and began to shuffle with the abandoned virtuosity of an old river-boat gambler, standing them on end, fanning them out, whirling them through her fingers, dancing them halfway up her arms, cracking the whip over them. At last they lay before him tamed into a neat deck.

"Cut?"

"Go ahead," he said. She liked to go first.

She gave him her faint, avenging smile and drew a card, cast it aside for another which he thought must be an ace from the way she clutched it face down.

She was getting all the cards, as usual, and would have been invincible if she had possessed his restraint and if her cunning had been of a higher order. He knew a few things about leading and lying back that she would never learn. Her strategy was attack, forever attack, with one baffling departure: she might sacrifice certain tricks as expendable if only she could have the last ones, the heartbreaking ones, if she could slap them down one after another, shatteringly.

She played for blood, no bones about it, but for her there was no other way; it was her nature, as it was the lion's, and for this reason he found her ferocity pardonable, more a defect of the flesh, venial, while his own trouble was all in the will, mortal. He did not sweat and pray over each card as she must, but he did keep an eye out for reneging and demanded a cut now and then just to aggravate her, and he was always secretly hoping for aces.

With one card left in her hand, the telltale trick coming next, she delayed playing it, showing him first the smile, the preview of defeat. She laid it on the table — so! She held one more trump than he had reasoned possible. Had she palmed it from somewhere? No, she would not go that far; that would not be fair, was worse than reneging, which so easily and often happened accidentally, and she believed in being fair. Besides he had been watching her.

God smote the vines with hail, the sycamore trees with frost, and offered up the flocks to the lightning — but Mrs. Stoner! What a cross Father Firman had from God in Mrs. Stoner! There were other housekeepers as bad, no doubt, walking the rectories of the world, yes, but . . . yes. He could name one and maybe two priests who were worse off. One, maybe two. Cronin. His scraggly

blonde of sixty — take her, with her everlasting banging on the piano, the gift of the pastor; her proud talk about the goiter operation at the Mayo Brothers', also a gift; her honking the parish Buick at passing strange priests because they were all in the game together. She was worse. She was something to keep the home fires burning. Yes sir. And Cronin said she was not a bad person really, but what was he? He was quite a freak himself.

For that matter, could anyone say that Mrs. Stoner was a bad person? No. He could not say it himself, and he was no freak. She had her points, Mrs. Stoner. She was clean. And though she cooked poorly, could not play the organ, would not take up the collection in an emergency, and went to card parties, and told all — even so, she was clean. She washed everything. Sometimes her underwear hung down beneath her dress like a paratrooper's pants, but it and everything she touched was clean. She washed constantly. She was clean.

She had her other points, to be sure — her faults, you might say. She snooped — no mistake about it — but it was not snooping for snooping's sake; she had a reason. She did other things, always with a reason. She overcharged on rosaries and prayer books, but that was for the sake of the poor. She censored the pamphlet rack, but that was to prevent scandal. She pried into the baptismal and matrimonial records, but there was no other way if Father was out, and in this way she had uncovered a bastard and flushed him out of the rectory, but that was the perverted decency of the times. She held her nose over bad marriages in the presence of the victims, but that was her sorrow and came from having her husband buried in a mine. And he had caught her telling a bewildered young couple that there was only one good reason for their wanting to enter into a mixed marriage — the child had to have a name, and that — that was what?

She hid his books, kept him from smoking, picked his friends (usually the pastors of her colleagues), bawled out people for calling after dark, had no humor, except at cards, and then it was grim, very grim, and she sat hatchet-faced every morning at Mass. But she went to Mass, which was all that kept the church from being empty some mornings. She did annoying things all day long. She said annoying things into the night. She said she had given him the best years of her life. Had she? Perhaps — for the miner had her only a year. It was too bad, sinfully bad, when he thought of it like that. But all talk of best years and life was nonsense. He had to consider the heart of the matter, the essence. The essence was that housekeepers were hard to get, harder to get than ushers, than willing workers, than organists, than secretaries — yes, harder to get than assistants or vocations.

And she was a *saver* — saved money, saved electricity, saved string, bags, sugar, saved — him. That's what she did. That's what she said she did, and she was right, in a way. In a way, she was usually right. In fact, she was always right — in a way. And you could never get a Filipino to come way out here and live. Not a young one anyway, and he had never seen an old one. Not a Filipino. They liked to dress up and live.

Should he let it drop about Fish having one, just to throw a scare into her, let her know he was doing some thinking? No. It would be a perfect cue for the one about a man needing a woman to look after him. He was not up to that again, not tonight.

Now she was doing what she liked most of all. She was making a grand slam, playing it out card for card, though it was in the bag, prolonging what would have been cut short out of mercy in gentle company. Father Firman knew the agony of losing.

She slashed down the last card, a miserable deuce trump, and did in the hapless king of hearts he had been saving.

"Skunked you!"

She was awful in victory. Here was the bitter end of their long day together, the final murderous hour in which all they wanted to say — all he wouldn't and all she couldn't — came out in the cards. Whoever won at honeymoon won the day, slept on the other's scalp, and God alone had to help the loser.

"We've been at it long enough, Mrs. Stoner," he said, seeing her assembling the cards for another round.

"Had enough, huh!"

Father Firman grumbled something.

"No?"

"Yes."

She pulled the table away and left it against the wall for the next time. She went out of the study carrying the socks, content and clucking. He closed his eyes after her and began to get under way in the rocking chair, the nightly trip to nowhere. He could hear her brewing a cup of tea in the kitchen and conversing with the cat. She made her way up the stairs, carrying the tea, followed by the cat, purring.

He waited, rocking out to sea, until she would be sure to be through in the bathroom. Then he got up and locked the front door (she looked after the back door) and loosened his collar going upstairs.

In the bathroom he mixed a glass of antiseptic, always afraid of pyorrhea, and gargled to ward off pharyngitis.

When he turned on the light in his room, the moths and beetles began to batter against the screens, the lighter insects humming. . . .

Yes, and she had the guest room. How did she come to get that? Why wasn't she in the back room, in her proper place? He knew, if he cared to remember. The screen in the back room — it let in mosquitoes, and if it didn't do that she'd love to sleep back there, Father, looking out at the steeple and the blessed cross on top, Father, if it just weren't for the screen, Father. Very well, Mrs. Stoner, I'll get it fixed or fix it myself. Oh, could you now, Father? I could, Mrs. Stoner, and I will. In the meantime you take the guest room. Yes, Father, and thank you, Father, the house ringing with amenities then. Years ago, all that. She was a pie-faced girl then, not really a girl perhaps, but not too old to marry again. But she never had. In fact, he could not remember that she had even tried for a husband since coming to the rectory,

but, of course, he could be wrong, not knowing how they went about it. God! God save us! Had she got her wires crossed and mistaken him all these years for *that*? *That*! Him! Suffering God! That was going too far. That was getting morbid. No. He must not think of that again, ever. No.

But just the same she had got the guest room and she had it yet. Well, did it matter? Nobody ever came to see him any more, nobody to stay overnight anyway, nobody to stay very long . . . not any more. He knew how they laughed at him. He had heard Frank humming all right — before he saw how serious and sad the situation was and took pity — humming, “Wedding Bells Are Breaking Up That Old Gang of Mine.” But then they’d always laughed at him for something — for not being an athlete, for wearing glasses, for having kidney trouble . . . and mail coming addressed to Rev. and Mrs. Stoner.

Removing his shirt, he bent over the table to read the volume left open from last night. He read, translating easily, “Eisdem licit cum illis . . . Clerics are allowed to reside only with women about whom there can be no suspicion, either because of a natural bond (as mother, sister, aunt) or of advanced age, combined in both cases with good repute.”

Last night he had read it, and many nights before, each time as though this time to find what was missing, to find what obviously was not in the paragraph, his problem considered, a way out. She was not mother, not sister, not aunt, and *advanced age* was a relative term (why, she was younger than he was) and so, eureka, she did not meet the letter of the law — but, alas, how she fulfilled the spirit! And besides it would be a slimy way of handling it after all her years of service. He could not afford to pension her off, either.

He slammed the book shut. He slapped himself fiercely on the back, missing the wily mosquito, and whirled to find it. He took a magazine and folded it into a swatter. Then he saw it — oh, the preternatural cunning of it! — poised in the beard of St. Joseph on the bookcase. He could not hit it there. He teased it away, wanting it to light on the wall, but it knew his thoughts and flew high away. He swung wildly, hoping to stun it, missed, swung back, catching St. Joseph across the neck. The statue fell to the floor and broke.

Mrs. Stoner was panting in the hall outside his door.

“What is it!”

“Mosquitoes!”

“What is it, Father? Are you hurt?”

“Mosquitoes — damn it! And only the female bites!”

Mrs. Stoner, after a moment, said, “Shame on you, Father. She needs the blood for her eggs.”

He dropped the magazine and lunged at the mosquito with his bare hand.

She went back to her room, saying, “Pshaw, I thought it was burglars murdering you in your bed.”

He lunged again.

BORIS PASTERNAK:

Dusk

Translated by Donia Nachshen

Dusk. On the slope we left the sturdy
hazels that grew at every hand.
A magic vista spread before us.
We paused and cast a look behind.

The young wood sported there, as ever,
before us on the precipice edge;
it climbed the whole way up and trampled
the rotten trunks the storm had felled.

The telegraph limped there, as ever,
a cripple, to its porcelain nests.
The air was panting, it was scrambling
and tossing back the witch elms' heads.

Beneath the Jagged hazel shadows,
as ever, there the highway rode;
it twisted through the evening twilight
in lovely whorls, wheeled and turned red.

Each fall, each rise held some foreboding,
thieves sprang to mind at every post.
A buffalo, straining at a tilt cart,
sailed like a naked devil past.

Afar where clouds in rings were coiling
like serpents on their eggs, more dread
than forays of the long dead Tartars,
a range of Chinese shadows spread.

A row of gravestones on a backcloth
of paths they were, blocked up by snow,
beyond the scenery of those skies, where
Prometheus languished, ceased to glow.

Like spirits of the dead arisen
the glaciers were there, each one,

and the ghosts register was taken
in Indian ink then by the sun.

Then on the sheer edge we four turned
and like one man cast down our gaze.
Swarming, like black lines on a sword hilt,
Tiflis was moving in the abyss.

So much it mocked the field of vision
and all creation that it rose
and remained like a chimaera,
a city of the other world.

As when it bought age-long survival
with tribute, though its life grew cold,
and Tamerlane over the mountains
fought with the Bans, fiery and old.

As if dusk brought it beneath the Persians'
fire on the plain as in time past.
Its roofs were raspberry red. 'T'was swarming
and motley as an ancient host.

Lyubka

Lately the rain strolled through the woodland clearing
like a surveyor with his clerk. The leaves
of lilies-of-the-valley were weighed down
with tin-bait and rain stopped the foxgloves' ears.

They're fondled by the chilly fir plantation
and in the dew they pull their lobes down;
They do not love the day, grow all alone
and even waft their scent forth one by one.

They're drinking evening tea in country houses,
and mist swells the mosquito's sail, and night,
jingling with sudden music of guitars,
stand in a milky darkness mid the cow-wheat.

There everything is scented with night violet:
the years and faces. Thoughts. And each event
that may perhaps be rescued from the past
and taken in the future from fate's hands.

DANIEL CURLEY:

The Ship

The space was too short to begin with. He had been working in the ship-yards long enough to be used to working in cramped places. But he didn't like it. He went through the same reactions each time he had to crawl into a space too small for him and all the work he had to do.

The first thing to do was to look at the job. Look at the job and curse. The cursing was slow and resigned, always without heat. It had nothing to do with a refusal to work. Even when he went up on deck before he struck an arc and told the leaderman what he thought of the whole motherloving business, he knew that he would go down again and start to work.

Then he went down into the forepeak. He repeated the curse formula. But even before he was finished cursing, he started to put on his jacket. It was stiff and cold, the way leather gets when it has been wet and dry. His shirt was already wet from the exertion of hauling his cable to the place where he had to work. He snapped the jacket close under his chin and turned up the collar. He snapped his shield onto his skullguard and pulled on his gloves. He put a dozen rods in his pocket. He looped the cable over his shoulder and climbed onto the tablelike, triangular piece that set into the bow of the ship.

He took the cable off his shoulder and passed it over a pipe to lessen the strain on him. As he passed the holder over the pipe, the bare end of it struck an arc. He blinked. He had no faith that the holder could be passed over the pipe without striking an arc; so he blinked before the arc was struck. Even with his eyes shut he saw a blinding flash of red. And when he opened his eyes, he couldn't see for a moment. He put a rod in the holder and prepared to weld.

The space was definitely too short. There lacked six inches of being enough room for him to stand erect. He tried kneeling, but the strain of holding his arms above his head was too great. He tried backing away, but a beam ran across the deck just behind his head. If he tried to get beyond the beam and low enough so that he could see, he couldn't reach. He stood with the beam against the back of his head. He spread his legs and bent his knees. He humped his back. He twisted his head to the side and back. He started the job.

The paint made it hard. The thick coat of paint over everything made his weld pop and boil as the burning paint bubbled down to the surface of the puddle of weld metal. The puddle broke and dropped down in fiery gobs of molten metal that bathed him in fire. The fire sought out his collar. It found the little hole in his sleeve near the elbow. It seeped in through the unsewed place at the crotch of his right mitten. The paint made it hard. The weld formed slowly, and as it formed it grew to be a series of small

bunches rather than a uniform bead. He climbed down from the tablelike piece. He took off his shield and gloves and jacket. He went up to set his machine hotter.

As he came up on deck he felt the chill of the morning air. Where a little rivulet of sweat had run down his back, there was now an icicle. He shivered. The sun was just getting up over Shop Eight, and the disengaged sections of steel booms that had been drifting through the fog began to join themselves into the familiar pattern of ordinary gantry cranes. The layers of fog over the canal began to thin out; where before had been white and black streamers, appeared black water, black swamps and vanishing fog. He knew that as soon as the red sun had finished with the fog, it would turn its attention to heating the deck. He picked his way over the deliriously cablestrewn deck to his machine. The machine was wet with dew. He stood on a snarl of cable to insulate him from the deck while he turned the wet machine ten hotter.

The machine was still too cold. The bead still formed slowly and great drops of metal fell exploding on the deck. He cursed in his shield and stopped welding. He scraped the flux off the weld. A rough uneven weld to be sure, but a weld. For the time being that would do. When he went up for a blow he could set his machine again. But now his legs were tired from the other trip, and he thought only of getting through the day and going home for some sleep.

His arms tired frequently in his cramped position, and he had to stop to rest. Just lowering his arms and raising them was enough rest at first, but after a while he had to stop for a few seconds each time he lowered his arms. Then it was nearly a minute each time, and the rests got closer and closer to each other. Then he had to stop to smoke a cigarette.

After the cigarette he was strong again. Not as strong as at first and he tired sooner. His neck started to get stiff, and the smoke began to make his eyes water. Now he had something else to stop for: he had to wait until his eyes cleared and the smoke dispersed. At first there were long periods between the times when his eyes blurred out, when the tears rolled in rivulets from his eyes and joined with the sweat springing from each pore of his face and the stream running from his nose to form a river rushing over the precipice of his chin and flooding the breast of his leather jacket. When his eyes blurred out, he had to steady himself against the hull and squat on his heels below the level of the smoke until he could see again. Each time as soon as he could see he went back to work. Each time he could stand the smoke and the heat for a shorter period. His jacket became heavy and soggy. His dungarees clung to his legs. His skullguard slipped on his head as the sweatband became slippery with sweat.

He had almost finished the easy side of the first header, and he promised himself a blow when he did finish. The smoke was getting so thick he could scarcely see. His eyes blurred. His mouth gaped for air. His arms ached. They were so tired they gradually dropped away from the weld. The arc popped and sputtered. A great drop fell out of the puddle. It fell inside his

collar. He cursed as it rolled down over his tender belly and caught for a second at his belt. He howled as it dragged its fire across his soft groin and shot the length of his leg. He jumped to the deck when it stopped in his shoe. He threw off his shield. He snatched off his gloves. He tore at his shoe, cursing. He knotted the lace. He broke it and tugged at the shoe. He had to stop to loosen the lace. He got the shoe off. And the sock. There was a shallow crater on the top of his foot, the size of a dime. It was pink and glistening. He put the shoe on carefully. He did not lace it.

The foreman and the leaderman came down the ladder. The foreman looked at him sitting there and said nothing. He climbed up to look at the weld. "Your machine is too cold," he said. The foreman and the leaderman went through an access hole into number one hold. He sat there and looked after them. His foot ached. He felt a frustrate rage. He wanted to leap after them and beat them with his scaling hammer. He wanted to knock them to the deck and cool his burning foot in the blood he would make gush from their heads. He picked up his wet sock and stuffed it into his pocket. He limped slowly to the infirmary. His foot hurt and he cursed as his heavy shoe chafed the new sore.

When he came back from the infirmary, he went down into the forepeak and began to weld again. The tiredness was gone. The air was clear. But the sun had started its work on the hull, and the whole forepeak was hot and stifling. It seemed as if the tiredness and the heat and the smoke had waited for him there in the forepeak and had started again just where they had left off. They had waited in ambush and had killed his new strength in the first onset. His arms ached. His eyes were dim. Sweat, tears, and snot dripped steadily off his chin, flooding the breast of his jacket just as his strength dripped off him and lay in a puddle on the deck about his feet.

He went down and took a small drink at the cooler. He felt very tired. He shivered inside his wet clothes in spite of the heat of the day. He took a salt tablet and another drink. Force of habit took him to the latrine although he knew he had sweat all the water out of his body. He stood there a conventional time and left. He took another salt tablet and another drink. He remembered that two salt tablets always made him sick. He climbed the gangplank. He felt sick. He hung over the rail. Saliva ran in a stream from his mouth. But he didn't vomit.

He went down the ladder into the forepeak through the column of heat that was rising up the ladder. He got dressed again and started to weld. He felt the tiredness climb onto his arm and swing there. Sweat began to run down his back and legs. Smoke crept into his shield. His eyes watered. His mouth gaped for air.

It was just as he was starting the second header that the noise began. The noise hit him on the side of the head and knocked him off balance. The rod jumped and stuck. He cursed.

The chipper was on the outside of the hull. He was chipping just where the welder was working. There was only the steel hull between them. The

pneumatically driven chisel beat against the hull with more than the rapidity of a machine gun. And in the forepeak the sound was magnified, echoed and reechoed from wall to wall of the boxlike room.

Gradually the noise of the chipping settled somewhere in the back of his head and lay there dully. There was an ache that ran all around his head just above his ears. It felt as if the top of his head had been screwed on too tight.

The rod stuck. He tugged at it futilely. He opened the jaws of the holder and left the rod sticking. There was a strange humming in his ears, and his head was stuffed with cotton. It was silence. The chipper had stopped. He had been leaning against the sound for so long that the silence threw him off balance. He felt drunk. The chipper started again.

He climbed out of the forepeak. He looked over the rail. The chipper sat on a scaffold, his legs dangling. He was braced against his gun. His safety hat lay beside him. He was young and golden in the morning light as he looked up at the blackfaced welder looking over the rail.

The welder had his drink and smoke on the ground. But this time the tiredness was waiting for him at the bottom of the gangplank. It hopped on his back as he started up. When he reached the top his legs were trembling and he was panting.

On deck the sound of the chipping was crisp and inoffensive, but as he started down the ladder into the forepeak, the sound rolled up at him, palpable and oppressive as the smoke and the heat. His foot began to hurt. He adjusted the bandage, which had slipped off the burn. The sound of the chipping made him sweat. As he put on his jacket, shield and gloves, he cursed. The muscles of his neck tightened. His eyes felt a pressure behind them. He trembled all over. The chipping never stopped.

He sucked in his breath. The air rushed into him and he felt swollen. He couldn't stop breathing in. It was not a regular breath but seemed to be several together without any air escaping from his lungs. He seemed to stop three times, but each time he sucked in more air rather than let any out. His chest was tight, his head hurt, he was afraid he couldn't get his breath again. His whole face ached with the strain of trying to breathe. And his eyes felt as if they would be shot from their sockets. He tore at his jacket. His breath came back to him, and he felt weak and deflated.

He had almost finished the second header. Just another two inches. His arm ached. Even bracing it in his left hand did no good. His left arm was tired too. He felt his arm dropping. He tried to hold it in place. He ached all over with the strain. His feet slipped on the smooth steel. His arm jerked. The rod stuck. It seemed as if the whole ship was dangling from the end of the rod. The rod slipped out of the jaws of the holder. He sobbed and sat down where he was. All around him the noise surged in vicious waves. It beat upon him. It tugged against his tired arms. It perched between his tired shoulders. It entered into his body with the air he sucked into his gaping mouth. He could feel it within him and without him. The sound slid its slow length around his guts. It tightened gradually the way a man will

stretch his arms in a yawn. It was so slow. So strong. So long-enduring. The sound within him finally gave a jerk that squeezed him dry. He got up and went up the ladder.

He was trembling as he came on deck. The sweat was furrowing down his face. It ran in sheets down his back and legs. He could feel water oozing in his shoes as he walked. He took the chipper's hose in his hand, bent it, and squeezed. The noise stopped. He heard the dying hiss of the shutoff hose as the chipper tried his air pressure. He heard the chipper cursing. He saw the chipper's face come over the rail just in front of him. He reached out a hand and pushed the chipper's face. It disappeared. He stepped to the rail just in time to see the chipper's hands slip from the edge of the A-frame that supported the scaffold. The chipper fell against the anchor. His head hit solidly. It reminded the welder of the time he stole a coconut from the A&P on the way home from school. He held it in his hand and smashed it against the curb, and the warm milk splashed over his hand. The chipper dropped into the water. A needle fish darted away just before he hit. The welder turned and went down into the quiet of the forepeak.

The men stormed down the gangplank at 3:25 and carried with them the few of the second shift that the warning whistle had caught on the way up. They hurried to put away their tools and get ready to get out of the yard. By 3:30 they were hanging back away from the clockhouse near the lockerroom and the warehouse. When the whistle blew there was a rush. The safety inspectors shouted and threatened, but the rush had already piled up long lines of men waiting to punch out and get their checks. There was talking and laughter between the lines as one filed rapidly ahead or another was held up. There was talk of beer, and there were bets on who would be the first to make it to the place where they cashed their checks. And when they had passed through the clockhouse, they compared the numbers on their checks to see who would win the pool. They waited to pick up their rides, and then they strode intently off among the cars, Indian file, in small parties.

The first shift swaggered into the bar with the air of men beating their way through swinging doors. At the farther end of the bar, which ran along two sides of the room, a small group milled about brandishing their checks. A girl behind the bar passed a fountain pen from one to the other and vanished into the back room with the signed checks. She returned with her hands full of money and threw it on the bar in front of the proper men. They took their money and stood up to the bar and ordered their drinks, always needing one more to settle the score.

The welder stood among the men waiting to cash their checks. The verticals of perspiration tracks in the grime of his face accentuated his gauntness. His hard hat was pushed back on his head. A man he knew vaguely as Slim from McComb bought him a beer. "This the third week in a row I bought the beers," Slim from McComb said. "I hope next week someone else has low in the check numbers."

"Thanks," the welder said. He took a long drink from the bottle. It was cold and bitter and tasted good.

"Going to cash your check?" Slim from McComb said.

"I guess so," the welder said. He took the pen that the girl held out to him. He put the check on the bar, picked it up, and turned it over and stared at it. The girl twisted her neck around so she could see the check. "Be sure to sign it Mike Collins," she said.

He wrote it slowly. It was difficult to write. It looked strange when it was finished. He passed the check over the bar and waited. He up-ended the beer bottle, emptied it, and set it down on the bar with a bang. The girl slapped a handful of bills on the bar in front of him. "Sixty-five dollars," she said. He picked it up and stuffed it into his pocket. Turning toward the other end of the bar, he ordered two Regals and asked for a dollar's worth of nickels.

He took the beer and the nickels over to where Slim from McComb was furiously shaking hands with a onearmed bandit. "Here's a beer," he said. "I hope it's as good as the one you gave me."

"Sure thank you," Slim from McComb said. "You want to get here? This my last nickel." He dropped the nickel into the slot and pulled the lever slowly. The wheels spun in wobbling streaks of variegated color and jerked to stops one after the other. "I guess I'll buy beer with my nickels from now on," Slim from McComb said.

Mike stepped up to the machine with his hand full of nickels. He set the beer on top of the machine and began throwing nickels into the slot. He jerked the lever and the wheels spun madly, and he sipped his beer, watching the wavering streaks of color through halfclosed eyes. The wheels jerked to stops and he lost. He lost and won. Lost more than won, but got back a little now and then. The talking and the laughter, the driving jive of the juke box became louder and more confused, blending into an amorphous roar that from time to time beat into his consciousness. He tried to brush it aside with his hand, but it beat insistently on his head. The sound, pure noise, beat on and on. It would not go away. It made him sweat.

Then Slim from McComb said, "Have another on me."

"OK." Slim from McComb left to go to the bar. Mike became intent on the slot machine and slugged down the beer before Slim came back with more. The noise was gone.

Slim from McComb brought him the coldbeaded bottle just as he finished the other. Mike sipped it. "Just as good as the other," he said. He dropped a nickel into the slot and yanked the lever.

"It's all good," Slim from McComb said. "And speaking of stuff that's all good, I got to be taking off. I got a date with the only girl I ever met who was hot in the pants as I am." He set his halfempty bottle on top of the machine and left. The noise of the bar swirled after him and surged back upon Mike, pulsing within and all around him. The wheels of the machine jolted to successive stops. He heard the rain of slugs in the cup. He turned back to the machine. He had hit the jackpot.

Mike's hands trembled as he scooped up a double handful of the slugs. He spilled a few on the floor and laughed hysterically. The men around the machine scrambled to pick them up. "Keep them. Keep them," Mike said. His voice was shrill. "Buy beers." He set the slugs back into the cup and picked up the jackpot coin. He held it flat in his hand and stared at it.

"That's worth ten dollars," a man said.

"I guess I'll keep it for good luck," Mike said. He picked up his dripping bottle and went out into the street, thinking of Slim from McComb and of a little place down the street he had heard about.

The sidewalk had the pleasant roll of a ship at sea. Mike staggered slightly and blinked his eyes at the light. He was surprised that it was not night. The beer and the bar and the noise had prepared him for night. It was incredible that it should still be afternoon. It seemed as if there should be the quiet softness of forsaken night. But the afternoon was harsh, and the beer bottle he held in his hand became a little foolish.

The next bar Mike went into—he was sure it was the place he had heard about—was smaller than the first place, dingier and darker. He slammed the empty bottle on the bar. "How will you trade me?" he said.

The fat man on the high stool behind the bar chewed his cigar over to the side of his mouth and kept polishing beer glasses. "The empty bottle and fifteen cents to boot," he said. "I'll open the new one free."

"It's a deal. And throw in a couple more for my friends." Mike indicated by a wave two men at the other end of the bar.

"OK. But it will cost you fifteen cents apiece to have them opened." The fat man quivered a bit on the high stool and slid ponderously to the floor. The two men at the other end of the bar raised their glasses to Mike and went back to their conversation.

Mike looked around the place. There was a latticework partition separating the bar from a dusky room beyond. There were tables in the room and a cleared space for dancing. Off in a far corner was the red glowering of a juke box, but now it was silent.

A shadowy woman sat at a table against the lattice. She rested her head in her hands. And her long hair fell forward over her hands. She was motionless.

"She drunk or asleep?" Mike said.

"She feels sad," the fat bartender said.

"Why is she sad?" Mike said.

"She just gets sad sometimes," the fat bartender said.

Mike walked over to her table. "Hello," he said. "Want a beer?" If the girl heard he couldn't tell. She remained motionless. He reached out his hand to touch her. He stopped. He touched her. She didn't respond. She neither shook off his hand nor rose under it. "Want a beer?" he said again. "Make you feel better." She remained motionless. He dropped his hand.

He backed slowly away from her table and sat down at the table on the

other side of the door facing her. He leaned his forehead toward hers and propped his head in his hands. His skullguard slid forward over his eyes. Even so the thought of the girl oppressed him. Her face that he had never seen was like the face in a dream, shifting incessantly, never clear. Dark or fair. Sullen. Crushed and hopeless. Proudly rebellious, shouting against fate. And what was the fate that had bowed her head and strewn her hair in sorrow over her hands? His continued brooding over the girl made him melancholy. The dim light of evening faded slowly through him. It was a quiet time, serene, a time of relaxation or resignation. He drifted into a sort of twilight stupor.

When he lifted his head again, the faint twilight had given way to hard electric light. He stepped to the door of the bar and stood hanging on to the frame for a moment. The room was bright and filled with smoke. Men were massed along the bar like thunderclouds along an August horizon. A man stepped from the street into the doorway at the other end of the bar. He stood for a moment blocking the door. A tall heavy middle-aged woman staggered along the bar and beat the newcomer on the shoulder. "Heavy, you old muffadite, how have you been?" she shouted in his ear.

"Fine, May, you old whore, just fine." He put his arm around her and gave her bottom an experimental slap. She giggled.

"Let's have a beer," she said. They went off down the bar.

Mike edged close to the bar to order a beer for himself. He took the bottle in his hand and began to wander along the bar. Suddenly remembering the girl with the sorrowful hair, he turned and ran to the table where she had been. She was gone. He spat a mouthful of beer into the chair where she had been sitting. He staggered across the dance floor, finishing the bottle as he went. He had almost reached the word MEN painted crookedly on the door of a boarded-off corner when he saw a girl sitting with her hair over her hands. He stepped toward her. But she lifted her head and laughed, and he knew she was not the girl. She turned and saw him staring, and her eyes were suddenly hard but her mouth went on laughing as she slowly turned back to the man opposite her. The man looked up at him and they both laughed. Mike stood there unwilling and unable to break away, rocking with indecision. He pulled a crumpled bill from his pocket and threw it on the table between them. And making a gesture which he conceived to indicate graphically what their impotence could do with the money, both his and hers, yes, the rest of the laughers, he set the empty bottle beside the door as one going to bed sets out a milk bottle. He opened the door and went into the men's room.

The stench of the place gagged him. He stepped carefully, trying not to touch anything. The fixtures were filthy and the floor was awash. He tried to walk without touching the floor. He lost his balance and fell against the wall. As he straightened he saw a small sticker advertising prophylactics: Don't Take A Chance. Another sticker giving the location of the nearest army greenlight station. A small machine for dispensing safes. Intrigued, he

dropped a quarter in the slot and turned the handle. Furtively he put the box in his pocket without looking at it.

A lean young man came in and stood beside him. He had an unlighted cigarette in his mouth. "Got a match?" he said.

Mike looked around vaguely. He picked a book of matches off the side of the scrimy washbowl. "Here you are. Keep them. Keep them."

"Cigarette?" the lean young man said. He held out a beat-up pack.

Mike took one. "Got a match?" he said. The young man passed over the matches. "Thanks," Mike said.

"You work out at Delta?" the lean young man said buttoning his fly.

"I'm a welder."

"You're a sucker. What do you make? A hundred a week?"

"Not that much," Mike said.

"Want a drink?" the lean young man said. He pulled a pint from his coat pocket.

"Don't mind if I do," Mike said. He grabbed the bottle and drank deeply.

"Take it easy. Take it easy."

"Plenty more where that came from," Mike said. He fished a handful of bills out of his pocket. "The next pint's on me." Mike killed the pint and threw the bottle to the floor. It crashed loudly on the concrete. He became furious at the sound and stamped out crunching the broken glass under his heavy work shoes.

As he came out of the men's room, he caught a glimpse of the girl with the sorrowful hair passing through the bar and going out into the street. He lurched forward. He was close to being sick. The figures of the men at the bar became indistinct. He could concentrate only on the rectangle of the door to the street. Everything else faded. The door burned into his mind as a necessity of paramount importance. He had to reach it. He walked faster. He started to run. He had to get to the door before the closing mist enveloped him. It settled closer and closer. It swam before his eyes. He shook his head to throw it off. His eyes were almost out. He fell down the steps to the sidewalk.

He ran off the top step and continued to run in the air. He rolled into the street battering his unfeeling body on the pavement. He crawled on his hands and knees to the building and pulled himself up. He had to keep going. He had to find the girl with the sorrowful hair. He put his hand in his pocket and brought it out clenching the package of safes. He felt sickness coming on. It crowded into his throat. It clutched at his stomach.

The wall turned and he followed it into an alley. He stopped for a moment. His knees buckled and he fell on his face. He got to his knees and hung over an overturned barrel. He was violently sick.

His churning stomach and gaping mouth wrenched him back to consciousness for a moment. Then he sank down a giddy abyss, hoping feverishly for oblivion.

The next time he woke up he was lying on his back. Two men were bending

over him, going through his pockets. He tried to get up but they held him down. He struggled. They held him, and he felt a heavy blow on his ribs. He fell back.

Someone said, "You're too handy with that knife."

Someone said, "To hell with it. He's drunk."

The men went through his pockets. He felt himself slipping down and getting further away from them. They faded away and away. For a moment he saw the girl with the sorrowful hair standing behind them. He could almost see her face. He tried to reach toward her, but one of the men held him with one hand and continued to go through his pockets with the other. He tried to reach toward her, but the effort was too great. He succeeded only in twitching the fist that held the safes. He heard one of the men say, "—jackpot coin from a slot machine. Keep it. It's good luck." There was a gigantic pounding in his head. The noises of the shipyard. The sound of pneumatic hammers. It beat inside his head and deafened him. He tried to put his hands to his ears, but the effort sent him spinning down a long pit toward black water.

There was blackness all around him. The water below him showed no reflection of light. The speed of his fall increased. The sound of the hammers grew louder. Just before he hit the water he struggled for a moment. Some last reserve of strength helped him to move his arms and legs and shout weakly. Then the water was close. The black water stood just below him. Even as he hit, even in the darkness, he saw a phosphorescent flash. He knew it was a needlefish darting away.

RICHARD EBERHART:

Aesthetics After War

*(To A. Nykyforczya,
Student of Sighting.*

*The floating reticle became your eye,
You saw flashing battle,*

You returned in the death lists.)

I. Propositions

Is the rose the same after it is seen?
Is it brighter if the seer has a blighted gall bladder?

If a poet is color blind, either by nature,
Or say by choice,
So that his deep wish to see purple
Gives him constitutionally a purple world,
As the romanticist finds excess where others
Do not find it,
As the classical scholar finds the world more classical
Than any striking steel worker knows it,
As the aesthetician finds the world
An aesthete's paradigm, to whom then
The pleasure principle is the end of all,
Do the poet, the romanticist, the classicist, the aesthetician
By their profound aberration
Discover the true reality of nature?

What is the relation of aesthetics to philosophy?
Should there be any?
Is its branch an authentic olive tree?
If you contemplate the rose, do you have to think about it?
If you achieve a beatific state
In the contemplation of the rose
Are you loving wisdom?
Is it possible to achieve abstract purity,
The ultimate knowledge of the object rose,
Without a mystical infiltration?
Should an aesthetician wish to think?

Should a thinking aesthete want to know God?
Will God appear in the ultimate stillness of the rose?

Keats confused, confounded two centuries
By ambivalent, ambiguous
Mating of truth with beauty.
Or are these absolutes safe in unattainability?
So that the searcher, as centuries ago,
May struggle, physically, logically, semantically,
Or by purposive derangement of the senses
To find them, being relatively certain
Their abstraction will inhere and remain
Long after his bones have turned to very earth?

What has the aesthetics to do with society?
Was the Italian airman crazy
When he saw aesthetic purity
In bombs flowering like roses a mile below?
He could not see nor feel the pain of man.
Our own men testify to awe,
If not to aesthetic charm,
On seeing man's total malice over Hiroshima,
That gigantic, surrealistic, picture-mushroom
And objectification of megalomania.
A world of men who butcher men
In the arsenical best interests of several states,
The modern warring maniacal man,
Is this world of men inimical
To the postulates of the study aesthetics?

II. Instruments

There are many intricate pieces of workmanship,
Precise instruments like the Mark 18 Sight,
With a floating reticle and a fixed reticle,
The fixed being a circle of light with a cross at the center,
The floating being eight brilliant diamond points of light
In a broken circle which enlarges and contracts
Framing the enemy wingspan, increasing
As the enemy plane comes nearer, grows larger,
Decreasing as it flies away, grows smaller,
The whole floating reticle a dream of beauty,
But accurate to a split second of gunfire,
Its gyroscopic precision solving all problems
Of boresight, the pursuit curve,

Of wind drift, range, of bullet pattern
 So that as semi-automaton all the young gunner
 Has to do is to frame the enemy plane
 In this brilliant circle of light and blaze away.
 This is one of a bewildering array of imaginations.
 Radar, as another expression of ingenious invention,
 In its excessive, but already dated modernity,
 Only gives man what bats have used for centuries,
 Whose vibrations, beyond the reach of the human ear,
 Strike obstacles which echo back to warn the bat
 Who instantly evades each thing that would harm,
 Although he seems to us to employ erratic flight.

Warfare spurs man to electrify himself with technics
 But never can the human be contraverted
 And as the Mark 18 Sight is only the fastest
 Eye in the fastest brain, the perfectly anticipatory one,
 And as radar is only an equal intelligence
 To the ancient, instinctive knowledge of the bat,
 So mankind in his abrasive rigors
 Constructing the mazes of his complex aircraft
 Often unwittingly makes them look like huge
 Beetles or other insects, and I have seen
 Hundreds of Corsairs parked in the evening glow
 Their wings folded back ethereal as butterflies.

If a floating reticle in an electrical sight,
 If a radar screen with its surrealistic eeriness,
 If an airplane poised on the ground like a butterfly
 Are beautiful, is their beauty incidental?
 Is it man's limitation that his mechanical creations
 Perforce cannot escape from his manhood?
 And that try as he will, his works are human
 And never stray far from the functions of the natural?
 The mystery is whether the object
 Mystifies man,
 Or whether the mysteriousness within man
 Transsubstantiates the object;
 Whether the world is finally mysterious,
 Or if the Diety has put a mystery in man.

III. The Pull of Memory

Each argument begets its counterpart,
 One in opposites the truth is human,

Intelligible, the shoemaker Boehme said.
 I recall a steamer on the Pearl River
 Slipping out from teeming Canton,
 Hong Kong outward bound through swarming sampans,
 The glow of the East, the intense hot day,
 The swan sweep of the boat on swan-swept water,
 The lull of the hours in the yellow afternoon,
 I remember walking the deck
 Watching the ritual of the opium eaters
 Through glassless windows in the inner sanctum,
 Sensing their subtle gestures and serene manners
 Through the prolonged trance of the opium haze;
 Then looking out, on the banks of the Pearl River
 Ancient of days, and of centuries,
 There stood a tall pagoda old as the memories of China.
 So Buddha seemed in the soft air to dwell,
 Incomparably indwelling, selfless and whole,
 Without action, away from world's suffering.
 And I was stolen in a trance
 Of the pagoda like a jewel in ancient, shimmering air,
 And of the mild-eyed Chinese recumbent after smoking,
 Mysterious inducements of the suffusing scene.

In the East contemplation is a self-annihilation,
 In the West it never escapes from intrusive action.

IV. Reality

The tail, the waist, the nose turret or the ball gunner,
 Using the sight with floating reticle
 Has only, if his work is properly done,
 Has only to press the trigger. The enemy explodes in the air.
 It is all so fast sometimes
 Neither pilot nor gunner can see the result,
 Until, far up and away
 Banking over, high above the blue ocean
 They glimpse far below pieces of plane
 Drift idly, suspended in the air.
 But reality is there.
 Death is the reality in this case,
 Love is the reality of St. Theresa,
 Identification is the reality of Boehme,
 For Blake innocence and experience
 Were indistinguishable in mystical affinity,
 Our enemy pilot was dead by a death-dealing pounce

Of superior machinery and superior manoeuvre and aim —
 But what Chance was there! —
 For in battle, as if man were made of adrenalin
 There is no time for fear or fault, for faith or fame
 But pilots say it is all like a football game.
 Back on the carrier their hearts may pound,
 After the event, when significance comes,
 But up in the air intense and free
 Controlled and able,
 Perfectly secure,
 What is the end of a man
 You never saw before,
 You never see?

It is the end of this man whose life yours never touched,
 Of whose existence you never knew,
 Young man, young man,
 Whose floating corpse you will never view,
 Whose friends you also slew,
 It is the end of this man,
 Or let us say it is the end of Man
 Christ shed his blood for,
 He shed His blood for you.

He knew you, savage trickster,
 Your accomplished guile,
 The total ignorance of your intelligent blasphemy,
 The evil that is ineradicable
 He died to show.

He would redeem the enemy airman's blood-muffled scream,
 He would redeem the pride of your indifferent victory.

Is there any doubt that Christ was the most aesthetic man?
 As aestheticism is a part of philosophy,
 Philosophy a part of life,
 Life action, for even the Nirvana-seeker still breathes,
 And Stylites pulls up food in a basket,
 So Christ contemplated the ultimate origin,
 But originated the ultimate rules of action.
 All things are interlocked, interlaced,
 Interinvolved, interdenominated.
 The pilot who pinched himself in his bomber,
 Because only a year ago he was a boy in school,
 Hardly realizing the magnitude of his change,

Was only one of a squadron,
 A flying integer in a welter of heterogeneity.
 Christ belonged to the Jewish race
 But Chinese and Japanese speak to Him now.

The poet is a man of sense
 Who handles the brightness of the air,
 The viewless tittles he dandles,
 Timelessness is his everywhere.

His blood is in the rose he contemplates
 The blood of the rose reddens in his mind,
 The poet is master of presences,
 He is the insight of the blind.

Poetry is so mad and so kind
 It is so majestic an inventive surprise,
 Is it any wonder that in it
 The spirit of man arise?

S. RAIZISS:

The Continuum

He said the streets run red
 The hot volcanic
 Clot of death
 Advances on the breath
 Of the whole city.

It is the Last Year's Eve he said
 Of all the world
 And this eleventh hour coming
 Crowds the living with the dead
 And clocks contradict the chiming
 No tomorrow to tell time.

A universal fume and shame
 Tents the turning circus
 Of our vast sob. The voices
 Climb the name what name they said
 Tell us tell us.

And I move among the driven
 Dragged across New York
 And up the sweating slope
 Of lost Mallorca
 Nagging through the hope
 Of Paris and Chungking
 Bleeding in Berlin
 And witness sin
 And witness judgment
 In the very square of time.

A game of crime a sport of pain
 You said and not too strange
 The fact's eventual change
 Disdains the plague of people
 A steeplechase a race
 Of raging egos.
 So it goes you said.

I worry in the human currents
 Hurrying with penitents
 Toward resolution
 In nightmare action of the night
 Against the drowning street
 The tragic traffic
 Give me meaning angel
 And the last direction.

Follow right and left
 If you are dead it said
 And true oblique to live
 With heart and head
 For the sure intuitive.

The unique agent's business
 Guiding bone and flame
 Slackens on its crossways beat
 And every hour I pass the same
 Stand correcting my retreat
 To bend my blood
 Along the thinning flood

Till worldly noise around
 The gabriel falls off. Falling
 Men and failing women

Call with an asking sound
Exhausted of the human
Agony and act.

Then of only semaphore
I question fact
That in my flight before
Had eyes and tongue
Among the furious song.

And where now— think
Where do I belong . .
Twice mechanical the wink
Of sallow light replies
With a catch of laughter
That all of us have died
From the known world.

The brain furls upon itself
The anxious fist
And hits for help
Against the deaf resist
And this is silence
Worst of sounds asylum
Echoing and empty
Unregenerate nothing nothing
No. Attempted
Suicide a lazarus I

Am left and cannot die
And walk alone in gloom
A limbo for a single soul
Denied the simple dooms
Of those condemned and those forgiven
To whom is plainly doled
Hell or heaven.

I have seen the cleft
Between them palimpsest
Of cities rise and thrive and drop.
They end in seeds and tender trees
And meadows creep across the theft
Of nature from the thieves of life.

Now the lonesome thought
 The I the ear hears
 A weird a godly rumor
 One distilled note I said
 Or two or three most new
 The cry of the womb
 The earth in childbed.

On the green ground
 The resurrecting round
 Of children star a nursery
 Under the raining curse.
 To the stranger I said
 Is this the dead
 And parturition come again
 After all all all
 Is this new men.

My memory is gone she said
 My time is come to leave
 My time is come to give
 In the crater's dust
 They live
 In the violent vent the still nurture

Of future

ESTHER McCOY:

A Poem About War Ending

This is a poem about war ending, in two stanzas and a coda.

In Stanza One you can hear the earth laughing.

The first summer of the peace was an uncommonly green summer. In Arkansas it rained in June and the little girls ran like puppies beside their mother, who carried a water pail full of blackberries she had picked in the pine woods. When she set it down the girls plunged their hands into it and crushed blackberries into their mouths. "Mother says they'll run out of our ears," one girl said.

It rained on Cape Cod, and the hog cranberries cushioning the dunes were like unending hair mattresses under the feet of the little boys. Their mothers picked water pails full of boletas, the crusty orange mushroom, that grew extravagantly that summer. The little boys emptied the pails in the back seat of the car and ran back to fill them with blueberries. There were the dark high bush berries, the frosty blue low bush berries, and the polished huckleberries that were almost as tart as beach plums. "Tomorrow we'll bring the coal scuttle," the little boy said as he lifted the last full bucket.

New York was lush and breathless, with sudden downpours. The men in uniform had the taut faces of people waiting for something to happen that had been long promised. And in those out of uniform the thing had happened, not outside them as they had been promised, but in an area in their faces equal to the length and width of a mask. The new theatre was between their cheekbones, where disenchantment begins and character sets in.

That year the girls were as round as pigeons in their bouffant skirts and flat black suede pumps. They all had bangs and wore their purses like papooses, and they were not yet disenchanted but were like girls at a dance waiting for a new man to cut in, then another and another.

And the war was like the heroic epilog of a play that no one had stayed in his seat to hear. Everyone had moved out to the sidewalk to stand under the marquee to wait for a taxi and look through the rain at the neon dancers in the big sign on Broadway. Inside the theatre the epilog hit the ceiling, bounced back and fell with a rumble to the empty seats.

In New Jersey the rivers were as high as the banks, and the vegetable stands on the roadsides were bulging with green.

In Stanza Two you can hear the women sewing.

Five hundred parachutes made out of nylon were bought up by a man named Homer Taylor in a little town in Missouri. He had an awning and upholstering shop, and since there hadn't been a great deal of work during the war in his line, he was glad to have something to sell. He sat down at

the telephone and began calling up people. The first ones to come wanted to buy up the best parachutes and leave him only the soiled ones. "If you pick out all the best ones I'll have to charge you more," Mr. Taylor said. "You didn't say anything about that on the phone," Mrs. Phillips said. "You just said fifty cents each." Mr. Taylor said, "Take them, take them."

So after the first batch of customers were gone the upholsterer spread out all the parachutes that were left, then, he put into one pile all those stained with red paint, oil spots or with dirt ground into them. Then he made a second pile out of the ones that were less dirty, and a third pile of the perfect ones that were left. He began making up bundles of six parachutes, putting one good one into each bundle, and dividing the soiled ones fairly. The women came again and said in surprise, "But Mrs. Phillips got all clean ones." "The parachutes are now in bundles," Mr. Taylor replied. The women opened the bundles and spread them out, but Mr. Taylor stood over them and cautioned, "No substitutions, please. No substitutions." The women were provoked at Mr. Taylor but they bought the parachutes for two dollars a bundle.

The parachutes were sewn with heavy linen-like thread in a felled seam, so that there were two rows of stitching to rip out, and when one parachute was ripped up and all the segments set one on top of the other, it was quite a pile of nylon.

Then the women set to sewing. They made pillow cases, which they had not had for a long time. They made pajamas and threw away the patched ones, and they made doily sets and luncheon mats. They turpented out the red paint and scrubbed out the dirt with a brush.

The town was filled with the sound of sewing.

Mr. Taylor, who helped take up the offering at the First M. E. Church, was asked often by the women as they put in their quarter, "Are you getting in any more parachutes, Mr. Taylor?"

But there were no more parachutes. That was the end of the war.

This is the coda.

When the Nuremberg trials were drawing to a close the pastures of Kentucky were so green they hurt your eyes.

Watermelons were piled beside the roads in Indiana.

In Missouri tarpaulins were stretched over the overflowing trucks of cabbage.

In Kansas the buckwheat headed up and the winter wheat was put in.

In Arizona a truckload of carrots bounced along a road with desert on one side and a high pink bluff on the other. The truck was so loaded with carrots that the road was marked for miles with bright orange spots, like flowers for brides or for Jesus entering Jerusalem. Every time the truck hit a chuck hole a few carrots fell off. The desert picks up colors and magnifies them. It picked up the orange and made it into a wail.

In the California desert the Joshua trees from which artificial legs are made sent out new spikes of green from last year's dead growth.

ROBERT RESOR:

Hawk

In a bamboo ambush
The birds speak parables
We do not understand.

We only understand
The black-on-dusty hawk
Defining a limpid gyre
(He improbably balanced
Upon a blade of air),
Preparing an imminent
Tall tale, topped
Only by the true obscure
Superscript of sky —
To which we now affix
A human moral. Heavy
The hawk hangs, poise
Of thunderbolt. Does
The thunderbolt consider
Justice — or whose hand?

The hawk propels a fury:
This only we understand
Who know in the end
Even the hawk dives dead.

The Lovers

Asking an impossible expansion
Of the spring in the locked box
Asking a permanent unmasking
Of the stone figures on the wall

Asking a revelation
That will be a consecration —
They petition, on bent knees, the night.

Although in the darkness
Love cocks his giant finger,
Still dust will level the mountain,

The valley stream recede,
And their two locked faces
Grow rusty as weathered clocks.

SHERMAN CONRAD:

Within the Family

They will all come back, moving free like subjects for poetry
Searchlight diamonds wheeling, then, in my castellated crown of loves.

Wolves now, their lives watch mine, devouring in and in
Upon this pinpoint fire I keep in blackening ice.
Their kisses, hisses. Tenderness, their talons.
Their rejections, colic poison my fear's wound soaks up.

O but dreams all tell how the swimmer of the scalding lake
Finds again his sister's slight beloved body, breasts first budding.
And every myth, O Seeds, Teeth, Bird and Bull, all jubilate this:
How they shall come again. Each himself then, a charming performer
Each, in the personal art of his own being.

First, mother comes. Electric hair a-crackle around her mimic sad child's face.
And look! the marvellous bear-dance she is doing!
Cigarette in formal hands, my somber silver father stands
He is shaken with noiseless laughter.
Here is George. Square as a number. Pickaninny eyes like dominoes.
His mystery is the intimation of diagonals; Dutch tile floors,
Duality of an actor masked, bisected motley of the clown.
John scampers by on quick beast-feet. Glares tenderly through his arms
Strung with the spectrum like a radio. His colors zing.

O but the holiday is illusory. Lines fall slack
Droop over continents and may not tense in skein again
Where they loop back and fail, at me. Sick beast
Unhumanly raging always for too much I and You.

But I shall come again I know:
When like any island tribe boy in a stinking hut—
The fever, shrieks and bestial masks, the fear endured —
I take the cut which disempowers our primal demon;
And initiate at last into love and separateness
I am able both to be and to belong.

RAY B. WEST, JR.:

Katherine Anne Porter: Symbol and Theme in "Flowering Judas"

Katherine Anne Porter, in writing of Katherine Mansfield's fictional method in 1937, said that she "states no belief, gives no motive, airs no theories, but simply presents to the reader a situation, a place and a character, and there it is; and the emotional content is present as implicitly as the germ in the grain of wheat." Of her own method she has written: "Now and again thousands of memories converge, harmonize, arrange themselves around a central idea in a coherent form, and I write a story."

Enlightening though these statements are concerning Miss Porter's concept of a short story, true as they appear to be of her own fiction and of the creative process, they still leave the reader with his own problem of "understanding" when he is confronted with the individual story. If we disregard the fact that the first statement was made about a fellow artist (it is still descriptive of Miss Porter's own stories), we must yet discover the "germ" which produced the emotion and which flowers into the final form of the story. Though we might say that the converging, the harmonizing, and the arranging constitute a logical, though partly subconscious, activity which serves to bring the objects of memory into some kind of order, still it is the nature of this synthesis — particularly in the predominantly social themes from *Flowering Judas* (1930) to *The Leaning Tower* (1944) — which puzzles most readers.

That Miss Porter herself was aware of the nature of her sensibility is clear from her comments concerning Miranda in a late story, who had, she says, "a powerful social sense, which was like a fine set of antennae radiating from every pore of her skin." Miss Porter's own social sense is most obvious (perhaps too obvious) in her latest long story, "The Leaning Tower," but it is not with the most obvious examples that the reader wishes to concern himself; rather, with the seemingly obscure; and since I have nowhere seen published or heard expounded an examination of "Flowering Judas," and since it is perhaps Miss Porter's best known story (to my mind, her most successful single work of fiction), let us examine that with the aim of understanding just what the author means by social sensibility — how it operates within the story itself.

The surface detail in "Flowering Judas" is relatively simple. An American girl who has been educated in a Southern convent is in Mexico teaching school and aiding a group of revolutionaries under Braggioni, a sensual hulk of a man, formerly a starving poet, but who is now in a position to indulge even his appetite for the most expensive of small luxuries. The girl (Laura) teaches her children in the daytime and at night runs errands for Braggioni,

acting as go-between for him and the foreign revolutionaries, delivering messages and narcotics to members of the party who are in jail. At the point where the story opens, Braggioni has come to Laura's apartment to discover, if possible, whether it would be worth the effort to attempt an assault upon her "notorious virginity," which he, like the others, cannot understand. Laura is physically attractive, and this is not the first time that she has been courted by the Mexicans. Her first suitor was a young captain whom she evaded by spurring her horse when he attempted to take her into his arms, pretending that the horse had suddenly shied. The second was a young organizer of the typographers' union who had serenaded her and written her bad poetry which he tacked to her door. She had unwittingly encouraged him by tossing a flower from her balcony as he sang to her from the patio. A third person, Eugenio, is unknown to the reader until near the end of the story, when it turns out that he is expected to die of a self-imposed overdose of the narcotics which Laura had delivered to him at the prison. He is, however, the principal figure in a dream which ends the story, a dream in which Laura imagines him to have accused her of murdering him and in which he forces her to eat of the blossoms of the Judas tree which grows in the courtyard below her window.

All of the immediate action takes place in Laura's apartment after she has returned and found Braggioni awaiting her. He sings to her in a voice "passionately off key," talks about their curious relationship, about the revolution, and finally leaves after having Laura clean his pistol for use in a May-day disturbance between the revolutionaries and the Catholics of a near-by town. Braggioni returns to his wife, whom he has deserted for a month to pay attention to Laura, and who, despite the fact that she has been weeping over his absence, accepts his return gratefully and washes his feet. Laura goes to bed and has her dream of Eugenio.

It will be seen, even from this brief summary, that there are a great many details unexplained by the course of the action. There is the concern with revolutionary activities running throughout; there are the comments concerning Laura's religious training: the nun-like clothing, her slipping away into a small church to pray, the May-day demonstration. Obviously, a great many details have symbolic references, not least of which is the title itself.

If we turn to any standard encyclopedia, we discover that the Flowering Judas is a tree commonly known as the Judas tree or Red-bud. We learn further that a popular legend relates that it is from this tree that Judas Iscariot hanged himself. A second fact is that the exact title appears in a line from T. S. Eliot's poem "Gerontion":

In the juvenescence of the year
Came Christ the tiger

In depraved May, dogwood and chestnut, flowering judas,
To be eaten, to be divided, to be drunk
Among whispers.

This is scarcely a coincidence, since Eliot's passage so clearly suggests Laura's activity at the end of the story. Our first question is: what use is made of this symbol? The dividing, the eating and drinking among whispers suggests the Christian sacrament, but it is a particular kind of sacrament. "Christ the tiger" refers to the pagan ritual in which the blood of a slain tiger is drunk in order to engender in the participants the courage of the tiger heart. In a sense this is only a more primitive form of sacrament, one which presupposes a *direct* rather than symbolic transfer of virtues from the animal to man. In the Christian ritual, the symbolic blood of Christ is drunk in remembrance of atonement; that is, symbolically to engender the virtues of Christ in the participant.

If the Judas tree, ~~then~~, is a symbol for the betrayer of Christ (the legend says that its buds are red because it actually became the body of Judas, who is said to have had red hair), then the sacrament in which Laura participated — the eating of the buds of the Flowering Judas — is a sacrament, not of remembrance, but of betrayal.

This leads us to other uses of the Saviour-symbol in the story. The first is Braggioni, who, at one point, is even called a "world-saviour." It is said that "his skin has been punctured in honorable warfare"; "He has a great nobility, a love of humanity raised above mere personal affection"; finally, he is depicted, like Christ, undergoing the final purification, the foot-washing. But there are important reservations in the use of this symbol: (1) the note of irony with which Braggioni is depicted and which suggests the attitude the reader should take toward him; (2) each time the Christ-like epithet is used, it is accompanied by other, non-Christian characteristics: "His skin has been *punctured* in honorable warfare, but *he is a skilled revolutionary*"; he is a *professional* lover of humanity, a *hungry* world-saviour. It is the use of the religious symbols alongside the secular which makes Braggioni the complex and interesting character that he is.

The second use of the Christ-symbol is present in the character of Eugenio, who is seen first as one of the revolutionary workers languishing in jail, but who figures most prominently as the person in Laura's dream. His name contains the clue to his symbolic meaning — well-born. As Christ is the Son of God, he is well-born. He is, likewise, a symbol of all mankind — Man. We say he is the "Son of Man." In this respect, Eugenio is also Christ-like, for he is well-born without the reservations noted in the character of Braggioni — in the highest sense. And as Judas was the direct cause of Christ's crucifixion, so Laura becomes the murderer of Eugenio (of Man) by carrying narcotics to his prison cell, the narcotics through which he (Christ-like) surrendered himself up to death.

We can say, then, that the use of religious symbolism by Miss Porter might suggest that her story be taken as a kind of religious allegory. But there are other, complicating symbols. There is, for instance, Laura's fear of machines such as the *automobile*; there is her dislike for things made on *machines*; and finally there is the statement that *the machine is sacred* to the workers. In the

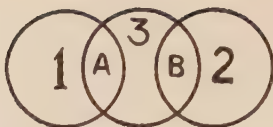
last instance, we may see how the word "machine" is coupled with the religious word "sacred," thus bringing the two kinds of symbols into juxtaposition, just as the same thing is implied in the descriptions we have had of Braggioni. For instance, "His skin has been punctured in honorable warfare" suggests the act of crucifixion, but "puncture" is not a word which we would ordinarily use in describing either the nailing of Christ to the cross or the piercing of his flesh by the spear of the Roman soldier. The most common use of "puncture" now is its reference to automobile tires (of which Laura is afraid). Likewise, the word "professional" used to modify "a lover of humanity" brings the modern idea of business efficiency into conjunction with the image of Christ, as though one were to say, explicitly: "Braggioni is an impersonal, cold-blooded Christ."

A third type of symbols is composed of love-symbols (erotic, secular, and divine). The story shows Laura unable to participate in love upon any of the levels suggested: (1) as a divine lover in the Christian sense, for it is clear that she is incapable of divine passion when she occasionally sneaks into a small church to pray; (2) as a professional lover in the sense that Braggioni is one, for she cannot participate in the revolutionary fervor of the workers, which might be stated as an activity expressive of secular love for their fellow men; she cannot even feel the proper emotion for the children who scribble on their blackboards, "We lov ar ticher"; (3) as an erotic lover, for she responds to none of her three suitors, though she thoughtlessly throws one of them a rose (the symbol of erotic love), an act of profanation, since the boy wears it in his hat until it withers and dies.

Having located these symbols, it is now our problem to examine the use that is made of them. More specifically, ~~we can~~ say that the religious symbols represent the Christian ideology, while the secular are symbols most readily identified with the attitudes of Marxism. As philosophy, they would seem to represent the two most extreme positions possible; yet both claim as their aim the betterment of mankind. If we consider them as areas within which man may act, we might represent them as two circles.



The third field (love) is not so much an area within which man performs as it is an attitude toward his actions. The fact that we refer to "divine love" and "secular love" will illustrate this distinction. On the other hand, if we speak of a "code of love," ~~then~~ love comes to resemble a kind of philosophy and is similar to Christianity and Marxism. As there is evidence in the relationship of Laura to the young Captain and to her suitor from the typographers' union that Miss Porter had this relationship in mind as well as the other, we might represent our third symbolic field as a circle overlapping the other two, but also existing as a separate area.



At this point, we must remember the relationship between "Flowering Judas" and Eliot's "Gerontion." The poem is concerned with a wasteland image; that is, with a view of life as a wasteland, sterile and barren as old-age, because of the absence of any fructifying element. Eliot's old man in the poem says:

I have lost my passion: why should I need to keep it
 Since what is kept must be adulterated?
 I have lost my sight, smell, hearing, taste, and touch:
 How should I use them for your closer contact?

In "Flowering Judas" Laura has lost the use of her senses: when the children scribble their message of love, she can feel nothing for them. They are only "wise, innocent, clay-colored faces," just as the revolutionists have become "clay masks with the power of human speech." She is like the prisoners, shut off from human contact, who, when they complain to her, "'Dear little Laura, time doesn't pass in this infernal hole, and I won't know when it is time to sleep unless I have a reminder,' she brings them their favorite narcotics, and says in a tone that does not wound them with pity, 'Tonight will be really night for you.'" Seeing the colored flowers the children have painted, she remembers the young captain who has made love to her and thinks, "I must send him a box of colored crayons." She confuses the children with the prisoners, "the poor prisoners who come every day bringing flowers to their jailor." "It is monstrous," she thinks with sudden insight, "to confuse love with revolution, night with day, life with death." Laura, like the figure in Eliot's poem, has lost her passion, she has lost her sight, smell, hearing, taste, and touch. She cannot use them for closer contact.

Now, if we return to our circles, perhaps this can be made clear. The philosophical systems represented by each circle (1. religion. 2. revolution. 3. love) represent a means of dealing with the wasteland. That is, faith in any one of the systems will provide a kind of signpost, which is the first step in transforming the wilderness of modern social living. By observing the signposts, we at least know where we are going or what we are doing there. Yet—it is still the wasteland. However, when we superimpose circle 3 upon either of the other two, the sterility disappears. In other words, either orthodox religion or socialism is a wasteland until transformed by the fructifying power of love; obversely, love is impossible without the object provided by either. In terms of our diagram, all is sterility outside the circles or at any point within the circles where 3 does not overlap either 1 or 2—that is, within the areas A or B.

Laura may be said to be outside any of the circles. Because of her early training, she is pulled away from a belief in the revolutionary cause of Braggioni. Be-

cause of her desire to accept the principles of revolution, she is unable to accept the principles of her religious education. Without either Christianity or Marxism, it is impossible for her to respond to her suitors or to the children. She cannot even feel pity for the prisoners; she can only supply them with narcotics, which likens their condition to hers, for her life seems to be a sense-less kind of existence similar to the drugged sleep of the prisoners.

Braggioni's condition is likened to Laura's ("We are more alike than you realize in some things," he tells her), but there are two important differences: (1) he has the revolutionary ideal as a guide; (2) he is capable of redemption, as the final, footwashing scene with his wife ("whose sense of reality is beyond criticism") shows. We can say, then, that Braggioni is not, as Laura is, outside the circles. He is within one of them, but it is not until he is touched with pity that he is brought wholly within the area of redemption (either A or B). Laura is not redeemed, even though she desires it, as the eating of the buds of the Judas tree suggests. Her sacrament is a devouring gesture and Eugenio calls her a cannibal, because she is devouring him (Man). She is, like Judas, the betrayer; and her betrayal, like his, consisted in an inability to believe. Without faith she is incapable of passion, thence of love, finally of life itself. Reduced to the inadequacy of statement, we might say that the theme, lacking all of the story's subtle comment, might be rendered as: Man cannot live divided by materialistic and spiritual values, nor can he live in the modern world by either without faith and love.

As the Nazi landlady in "The Leaning Tower" is made to say when overcharging the American student who wishes to cancel his lease: "Indecision is a very expensive luxury."

Laura's world, then, is as barren and sterile as the world of Eliot's "Gerontion"; it is a living death. Said another way, the living world exists only in our sensory perception of it, and any deadening of the senses (through a denial of traditional human values) constitutes a relinquishing of moral responsibility — the betrayal of mankind into the hands of the Braggionis or, as in "The Leaning Tower," into the hands of the Nazis.

This is, I suspect, what one reviewer discovered as early as 1938, when, in a review of the volume *Flowering Judas*, he wrote: "Miss Porter, I feel, is one of the most 'socially conscious' of our writers." But one might also fear that this reviewer was thinking in terms of the predominant Marxist movements of the thirties, into none of which Miss Porter could, obviously, be made to fit. "I do not mean," he continued, "simply that she is conscious of the physical suffering of her impoverished people; I mean rather that she understands the impoverishment of mind and spirit which accompanies the physical fact, and she sees too that some native goodness in these minds and spirits still lives."

But if "some native goodness" were all Miss Porter's characters had to recommend themselves to us as resolutions of our social dilemma, then every author who does not allegorize good and evil is still "socially conscious," and the reviewer's remarks represent a somewhat dubious compliment. The fact is, how-

ever, that he was right perceptually. Behind Miss Porter's elaborate structure of symbol and myth lies the psychological motivation which produces the theme. The germ which lies implicit in the grain of wheat is the central idea about which her memories cluster. An idea does not constitute her "meaning" in the usual sense of the word, but it represents a concept which makes the surface detail available to meaning. To put it another way, the very rightness of the *ideological* fact (the myth or symbol) charges the *particular* fact (the object as it exists in nature) with a meaning that is presented as an experiential whole, but which is available in all its complex relationships only when we have become aware of the entire field of reference.

JOSEPH PRESCOTT:

HARRY LEVIN, ed.: *The Portable James Joyce*. The Viking Press.
 RICHARD M. KAIN: *Fabulous Voyager: James Joyce's ULYSSES*.
 The University of Chicago Press.

Professor Levin gives us all of *Dubliners*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Exiles*, and *Collected Poems* (with two poems hitherto "uncollected"), five excerpts from as many chapters of *Ulysses*, and six selections from *Finnegans Wake*. From the author of the best book on Joyce we expect and get an admirable introduction, and there are helpful prefatory notes on the individual texts reprinted. The statement that "the published text [of *Dubliners*] included the exceptionable matter," however, requires qualification, for, as a study of Joyce's correspondence reveals, the final version of "Counterparts" omits some of the language which was thought objectionable. Furthermore, considering the importance of *Ulysses* not only among Joyce's works but in modern literature, it seems parsimonious to give to this book only some forty out of well over seven hundred pages. And, since a cardinal feature of the technique of "The Wandering Rocks" episode is the recurrence of phrases among its numerous sections, to offer only one of the sections is to deny the reader the opportunity to observe the wandering of the rocks. Finally, concerning *Finnegans Wake* Professor Levin, I think, has got off the understatement of the year: "it cannot yet be considered readable in the sense of an ordinary novel."

If Professor Levin is sparing in his treatment of *Ulysses*, Professor Kain lavishes the closest attention upon almost every detail in the novel. In his first four chapters he considers the place of Joyce in the modern world, the tonal pattern of *Ulysses*, its epic structure, and its integrating themes. He goes on to treat Leopold Bloom, Stephen Dedalus, minor characters, the geography of Dublin, psychological associationism, the use of sound, and the technique of the "Sirens" episode. In the last four chapters he deals with the social and philosophical implications of the novel. Four detailed appendices follow: an outline of the character of Leopold Bloom, a biographical dictionary of *Ulysses*, a directory of historical persons and places in the novel, and an index of verbal motifs. In other words, Professor Kain analyzes nearly every conceivable aspect of his subject.

Unfortunately, the book suffers from the defect of its virtue: the analysis is so full that one comes out of it asking, Why read *Ulysses* now? A number of chapters schematize, in prodigal detail, characters and experiences which are easily accessible in the novel itself. These portions of the book are needless even for the common reader, who, in the quarter of a century since the appearance of *Ulysses*, has come to take for granted much that was once considered esoteric. The detailed results of Professor Kain's painstaking study, besides often telling the reader what he can readily find in the novel, add little to what has already been written on Joyce. It seems to me that Professor Kain might have distilled his findings into a longish essay.

Not to err about *Ulysses*, with its myriad details, would be divine. The "closest approximation in *Ulysses* to the style of *Finnegans Wake*" is not the language at the end of the hospital scene, but the word-blends which occur intermittently in the novel, oftenest in the brothel episode. At the end of the day Bloom and Stephen drink cocoa, not tea. The discussion of Shakespeare takes place in the National Library, not at Trinity College. At twilight Bloom fears to show himself in profile, not to Martha Clifford, but to Gerty MacDowell. That the keeper of the cabman's shelter is Skin-the-goat Fitzharris is not, as Professor Kain assumes, a certainty. It is Simon Dedalus's daughter, not a street urchin, whose dress is in flitters. Bloom is assigned Menton's oyster eyes. And Dodd gave a florin, not one and eight, for the rescue of his son.

These are, however, only a few details in a study which, swarming with details, reminds us of the supremacy of *Ulysses* among Joyce's works and makes a substantial contribution in its discussion of Joyce's place in the modern world, in its analysis of Joyce's use of Dublin newspapers, in a number of perceptive comments strewn through the volume, and in its closing generalizations.

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Of ACCENT, published quarterly at Urbana, Illinois, for March, 1947.

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BORIS PASTERNAK, most important of contemporary Russian poets, was represented in the Autumn 1946 number of *ACCENT* by the third and final section of his autobiography, *Safe Conduct*.

J. F. POWERS' readers will be glad to note the spring publication of his first collection of stories, *Prince of Darkness*. The title story (originally in *ACCENT* for Winter 1946) is being reprinted in Martha Foley's *Best American Short Stories 1947* and in an anthology edited by Katherine Anne Porter.

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